AN APOLOGY FOR, OR VINDICATION OF THE

Oppreſſed perſecuted Miniſters & Profeſſors of the Presbyterian Reformed Religion, in the Church of *Scotland*; emitted in the defence of them, and the cauſe for which they ſuffer: & that for the information of ignorant, the ſatisfaction and eſtabliſhment of the doubtful, the conviction (if poſſible) of the malicious, the warning of our Rulers, the ſtrengthening & comforting of the ſaid ſufferers under their preſent preſſurs & trials.

Being their Teſtimony to the Covenanted work of Reformation in this Church, and againſt the preſent prevailing corruptions and courſe of defection therefrom.

PROV. XXIII. Verſ. 23.

Buy the truth & ſell it not; alſo wiſdom, inſtruction, & underſtanding.

I. PET. III. Verſ. 15.

But ſanctify the Lord God in your hearts; & be ready always to give an anſwer to every man, that aſketh you, a reaſon of the hope, that is in you, with meekneſs & fear.

JUD. Verſ. 3.

It was needful for me, to write unto you, & to exhort you, that ye ſhould earneſtly contend for the faith, which was once delivered unto the ſaints.

Preſtat ſero, quàm nunquàm ſapere.

Printed in the Year 1677.

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To the most Noble and Honourable

LORDS,

The Lords temporal of his Majesties Secret Council, in the Kingdom of *Scotland*.

Most noble and honourable Lords.

CAsting our eyes about us to see, under the wings of whose patrociny & protection, we should shelter the ensuing *Apology* or *vindication*; we could not, in our apprehensions, fix upon any so fited for this, as your *Lo.* who, by the station, & office you bear under his *Maj.* in this Kingdom, are constitute the protectors of the poor, the Releevers of the oppressed, & the breakers of every unjust yoke: the serious thoughts of which does afford us this confidence, that as our unjust oppressions make us objects, fitted for your *Lo.* compassion and justice; so your *Lo.* office, and what it binds unto, in the behalf of the oppressed, before God and men, will

on the ingenuous & plaine production of our reaſons, for the juſtice of our cauſe, at length prevail, for breaking of theſe yokes of oppreſſion now on us; and removing of their real cauſes. We therefore cannot but in charity and reaſon expect, that much humanity & juſtice, from your *Lo.* that was granted by heathen Rulers, to Miniſters & Chriſtians, in the primitive times of the Chriſtian Church; of which we have in Scripture & Hiſtory memorable inſtances. Was not *Paul Act.* 26:1. permited by King *Agrippa* to ſpeak for himſelf, who, in vindication of his righteous cauſe, deduced the grounds thereof, and cleared them ſo to the conviction of his hearers, that they judged him neither worthy of death, nor of bonds? Did not ſome of the Roman Emperours, upon the reading of the Apologies of the Chriſtians, as of *Juſtin Martyr*, *Apollinaris*, *Mileto*, *Origen*, *Tertullian*, and others, declare their innocency, and mitigat the rage of perſecution, that then prevailed againſt them? May not

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we then, who profeſſe the ſame Proteſtant Religion with your *Lo.* entertaine ourſelves with the hope of the ſame favour & juſtice, that was shewed by Rulers, to the Lords people before us?

As our adverſaries calumnies & bitter reproaches, with which they labour to render us odious to all, eſpecially, to your *Lo.* are unjuſt and malitious; (being partly their evil and uncharitable deductions from our principles and actions, and partly groſſe & notorious lies; ſuch as the heathens charged on the primitive Chriſtians, who finding no juſt mater for their accuſations from their Profeſſion and behaviour, gave it out to the world, that they worshiped the Sun, an aſſes head, and uſed promiſcuous copulation at their aſſemblies;) So it is the Teſtimony of our conſciences, that as a brazen wal does sheild & uphold our Spirits from ſinking, under thoſe burdens, with which they have aimed to keep us at under with your *Lo.* We know, there is no new or ſtran-

ge thing happened unto us, but what hath been the common lot of eminent ſaints, yea of Chriſt Jeſus, our bleſſed Lord and Maſter; the ſervant is not greater then the Maſter; if they dealt ſo with him, no mervail they deal ſo with us. So great is the Teſtimony & witneſs of our conſciences, as to all the greivous things, they have and do charge upon us, that we have hitherto poſſeſſed our ſouls in patience, and not opened our juſt and true greivances (as we might and should have done) for fear of offending your *Lo.* But perceiving the truth of the Goſpel, the righteouſneſs of our cauſe, and the welfair of immortal ſouls, are like to ſuffer thorow our too long ſilence, we have adventured to diſcloſe our thoughts, and to give, ſo far as we can, a ſatisfieing account of the grounds of that faith and hope, for which we ſuffer. The God of Gods knowes, & Iſrael shall know, we uſe this fredom and plainneſs of ſpeech towards your *Lo.* and all others, not from any contentious and ill affect-

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ed humour; but from the ſenſe of the obligations laying on us, for the conſervation of the true intereſt of Religion, and the hope of relief for theſe from your *Lo.* which we moſt humbly beg and exſpect, for the ſake of truth and righteouſneſs, that are now fallen in the ſtreets, and fled into Corners. If on an impartial examination of what we have ſaid, in the defence of our cauſe, and of ourſelves for its ſake, againſt the reproachs of our enemies, it shall be found that it is not juſt, but iniquous, we ask no benefite from your *Lo.* clemency and juſtice; let all ſeverity be uſed. But if the cauſe of our former and preſent ſufferings be righteous (in the confidence of which, we have been bold to give to your *Lo.* and the Chriſtian world this ſober enſueing account) we humbly entreat that protection and relief in its defence, which your power and ſtation in this Kingdome do enable and oblige your *Lo.* to.

Wherefore caſting ourſelves at your *Lo.* feet. We doe, in the behalfe of

pure Religion & undefiled & the ſouls of all concerned therein, beſeech your *Lo.* *First* That our juſt & well grounded exceptions againſt *Prelacy* & *Eraſtianiſme*, may be taken into conſideration & laid to heart: for if they hold good, will not the future conſequences of theſe evils, to this land, your *Lo.* families, & poſterity, be dreadful, who thereby are laid pento the judgments, denunced in the the Word of God, againſt perjury and Covenant breaking? We doe not lay the ſtreſſe of our cauſe on the Covenants & Oaths, taken by this nation, againſt the foreſaid evils or corruptions, as the primary and chief Argument (as will appear to all on the peruſal of our ſubſequent *Apology*;) but on their oppoſition to the Word of the holy and true God: for, we grant, Covenants and Oathes, that are obligatory and binde to an obſervance, ſuppone their matter to be antecedently juſt, and do bring their primary obligation from it; hence the things contained in, & engaged to by Covenants and Oaths,

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muſt be proven and made out to be neceſſare & righteous from the Word of God, before their obligation can be admitted & received; which we have laboured to doe, in this following diſcourſe. And if from it, our Covenants and Oaths doe appear to be juſt, are we not aſſured, that the corruptions and ſins engaged againſt by ſuch divine tyes, and relapſed into contrare to theſe engadgments, doe provoke our Holy and righteous God, to the inflicting of all thoſe plagues and judgments, threatened in the word againſt the violators of ſuch ſacred bonds? And if this be a truth; (as we hope none will deny) what can we then expect to our ſelves & poſterity, if reformation & repentance doe not prevent, but ruine and deſolation, according to every ones acceſſion to theſe evils; which, no doubt, are crying for vengeance on this declining Church? *Next*, We pray your *Lo.* to conſider, that we build our concluſions on no other foundation, then our worthy reformers in this

Church

Church and others, laid downe in their arguments and debates againſt *popery*; which for its want of, and oppoſition to the holy Scriptures, they have condemned for an Antichriſtian defection from the doctrines of Chriſt. We hold to the ſufficiency and perfection of the holy Scriptures, reſolving, thorow the Grace of God, to admit of no other rule of faith and obedience, in the maters of our God, but theſe: what they condemne, we muſt renunce; & whatſoever doctrins or practiſes, in the houſe of our God, want their authority and approbation, we cannot, yea dar nôt admit? The experience of the Church in preceding ages ſhews, what miſchelfs, the opening of this door, hath brought in upon her, to the almoſt uter ruine of all her concerns.

The preſent grouth of *popery*, and the quick advance it makes among all degrees of Profeſſors, in this and our nighbouring Churches, ſayes to all, &, we ſuppoſe, to your *Lo.* that the faſety & preſervation of the proteſtant reformed

formed Religion, does, in all prudence, require, that its real and ſincere friends ſhould be encouraged, and not thus perſecuted with violence; which no doubt, tends ſo to the weakening of the Proteſtant intereſt & cauſe, that in one of *Queen Elizabeths Parliaments*, it was judged a ſufficient reaſon, not only to reſtraine the rigide preſſing of conformity, but likewiſe to encourage all Non-conformiſts, who, in thoſe times, were looked upon as ſtout antagoniſts to popery, and ſuch as might be employed, entruſted and made uſe of in oppoſition to it. Is it not to be feared, that the *Pope*, having his inſtruments and emiſſaries amongſt us, for working out of his deſignes on theſe Churches, which, all his former engines have not hitherto effected; and finding, through our confuſions and diſtempers, the occaſion fitted for his purpoſe, hath no queſtion, a ſecret active hand, in influencing and increaſing of this violence; which, if the Lord, in his mercy to this many wayes afflicted

ſlicted and ruined Church, doe not prevent; will facilitat his longed for, & much endeavoured deſignes againſt the reformed Religion in theſe Ilands. And however we are repreſented to your *Lo.* as unfriends to Religion, and the intereſts of State (as if they muſt ruine if we ſtand) yet the experience of paſt and preſent times, beſide our publick confeſſions, doth ſufficiently witneſſe, how malitious our adverſaries are in this unjuſt calumny? We are no innovators, nor pleaders for innovation in Church or State; but do hold, adhere to, and reſolve, through the grace of God, to maintaine the reformed Proteſtant Religion, againſt all ſorts of enemies, as it is contained in the holy Scriptures, ſummed up, and breifly comprehended in the Confeſſions of faith of the reformed Churchs; eſpecially in the Confeſſion of faith, Larger & ſhorter Catachiſmes of this Church, in oppoſition to all *Popiſh*, *Arminian*, *Socinian*, and *Sectarian* errors and innovations. We hold for our maine & rooted

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ed principle, the holy Scriptures to be the Word of God, the absolute perfect and only rule of faith and maners; not needing any supplement of Ecclesiastical tradition; yet we do not deny Antiquity its due respect, use & reverence: and although we maintaine, that every Christian, of what rank & degree soever, ought to study, & be conversant in the Scriptures; yet we acknowledge the necessity and great use of a Gospel standing Ministry, and receive the directive authority of the Church, not with an implicit faith, but with the judgment of discretion. We hold the teaching of the Spirit necessare to the saving knowledge of Christ; but absolutly deny, that the Spirit bringeth new revelations in maters of doctrines, worship & Government; but only that he opens the eyes, and enlightens the understanding, that we may perceive and rightly take up, what is of old revealed in the word by the same Spirit. We rejoice in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh,

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or in a legal righteousnes; desireing to be found in him, who of God, is made unto us wisdom, righteousnes, sanctification and redemption; yet we constantly affirme, good works of piety towards God, of equity and charity towards men, to be necessare, both *necessitate precepti & medii*: our Ministers presse on themselves & hearers, the necessity of Regeneration, as the solid fundation of good works; & the severe, strict exercise not of a popish out side formal, but of a spiritual, real mortification and self denial. We extol all ordinances of divine appointment; but reject all humane inventions, especially religious and significant not institute ceremonies in the worship of God.

It ought to have no little weight with your *Lo.* that by using of such violence, the most sober, judicious, universally religious and industrious part of the subjects, and consequently the most useful and stedfast to his Maj. true intereſt and honour, are exposed to dayly vexation and trouble, to the great dam-

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mage and prejudice of this Nation and Kingdom. We ſuppoſe that, upon an impartial view, it will be found, that the choice and better part of the ſubjects is diſſatisfied with the Government, now introduced into this Church, and conſequently obnoxious to the ſeverity of the lawes, enacted againſt non-conformiſts: and of what dangerous conſequence this may prove to Church and State, we leave to your *Lo.* moſt ſerious conſideration. We know, the certaine iſſue of all maters, is known to God only; but if we shall take our meaſures, in conjecturing at future events, from the working of preſent cauſes, there is all rational ground to fear, that there are diſmal and heavy times coming on this nation; which, by taking and fallowing of right wayes, in the preſent juncture of affaires, your *Lo.* may prevent; and if not done, will no doubt, afford mater of bitter ſorrow, & repentance to your *Lo.* or children afterwards. It is & shall be our hearty prayer to God, that your *Lo.* may have the Spi-

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rit of wiſdome, and of the fear of the Lord, poured out upon you, to foreſee the evils, that are haſtening towards us; and in time to hide yourſelves, this Church & Kingdom from them.

Is it not apparent to all, that conſcience does not act, nor lead our antagoniſts? Do not their opinions about Prelacy; their Profeſſion of all readineſs to comply with the contrare, if on foot; their frequent changes into the intereſts and formes of all preceeding times, how contrare ſoever to their once profeſſed and ſworn principles (while true Presbyterians remained conſtant and immoveable, thorow the times that went over their heads;) their covetous and licentious lives, diſcover their want of conſcience in the courſes, they now ſo furiouſly run? Let not your *Lo* think, that it is his *Maj.* intereſts, (as they pretend) or any true conſciencious regaird to theſe, that moves them to ſuch obſeqiuous compliance with the preſent lawes? Let the outward intereſts of this world be ſepa-

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rated from their way; and it shall soon appear, how void they are of true zeal for his Maj. and his lawes, as is evident beyond all denial, from their carriage & behaviour, in past & present times. As we have no external benefite to expect to engage us against conformity to the present lawes about Church Government; so we are to look, from our principles, and practises conforme thereto, no lesse then the ruine of our selves & families in this world: if conscience of duety towards God & this Church, according to the word, did not determine and move us, of all men we were the most foolish and miserable; but seeing our hearts, in the consideration of the justice of our cause, & of the sincerity of our intentions, in acting conforme to it, does not condemne us; we have this confidence towards God, that as we are acquit & shall be justified before him; so shall we be recompenced and rewarded, to the aboundant compensation of all outward loses; even for these things, for which we are condem-

ned of men; so that that which is esteemed our folly, sin and misery, is and shall be reputed our righteousnes, wisdom and glory.

Albeit we have not the external advantages of power, riches and wordly policy, but the contrare to contend with, and endure; yet, seing the Word of God in our hands, doeth prosper and prevail to the gaining of immortal souls, the restraining of impiety, and the propagating of the savour of the true knowledge of Christ Jesus, in all places where it comes, notwithstanding of the opposition made unto us in this work; it will, on many accounts, be your *Lo.* wisdome, not to stand in contradictory tearmes thereto, least your *Lo.* be found to fight against God in the persons of his servants and people; for, we are assured, that this work and cause is of God, partly for its conformity to his holy word; & partly for its undeniable fruit and successe, in converting & saving of souls from sin, preserving and maintaining of its self, against the opposition it meets with on all hands; which we take for a signe of its being of God, as the Christians did of old in their debates for the Christian Religion against its adversaries, which under great opposition grew and prevailed exceedingly, although stript of all the outward advantages of worldly power and policy. If this cause be of God, and approven by him, as we nothing doubt,

doubt, it will not be in the power of the mighteſt to crush it. Men may afflict and put us to great ſufferings (which to them will be a ſigne of perdition, but to us of ſalvation;) but while this Church continues Proteſtant, and hath God abiding in her, their contradiction will be in vaine, as is hitherto manifeſt. And a thowſand to one, but it reſolve in their own ruine here & here after.

The mater of difference betwixt us and our adverſaries, being in their owne confeſſion (a popular argument they much uſe with the people) not foundamental, but indifferent, we humbly beg of your *Lo*, that for preventing of further confuſions in this Church, & attaining of the true peace of the ſame, you will be pleaſed, to conſider, whether it be better and ſafer for this Church, that the Chriſtian Reformed Religion be totally ruined among us, for ſatisfying of a few; or a thing indifferent, & far removed from the vitals of Religion, be taken away, and not thus enforced by violence on ſo conſiderable a part of the ſubjects, who, for conſcience ſake, cannot receive, nor ſubject thereto? And knowing that a ſerious and impartial examination of this one queſtion, if diligently purſued, would quickly determine your *Lo*, to courſes quite oppoſite to theſe now proſecuted with ſo much heat againſt us; we intreat your *Lo*. not to give eare to theſe ca-

lumnies and undue repreſentations of the preſent caſe of affaires in this Church, made by our enemies, the *Prelates*, by which they labour to inſtigat to all this unjuſt and unſeaſonable violence, that will Produce bitter and lamentable effects to this & the ſucceeding generation, if not prevented in time.

Moſt noble & honourable Lords, we cannot but take notice of that too common prejudice entertained againſt Presbyterian Government, & inſtilled with ſo much artifice by our oppoſits in the mind of many, on which, they have alas too much advantag, through the love of ſin, & natural enmity at the wholſome ſeverity and power of the Chriſtian Religion, that is predominant in all unregenerat perſons; to wit, the ſtrictnes & impartiality of Presbyterian Government in its exerciſe, againſt all ſorts of ſcandals, in all degrees of Profeſſours, the great as well as the meane; for we know, that while Presbytery was up and in vigour amongſt us, the zeal and faithfulneſs of Miniſters, in reprehending all ſorts of ſins, and exerciſing of diſcipline impartially, conforme to the commands and ruls of the word, without exception of perſons, is that which hath cauſed all this diſlike of, and rigour againſt Presbytery; and conciliat that much reſpect to, and love for Prelacy, as to eject the one, & bring in the other. We will not now enter on the debait, whether this ſtrictnes

againſt ſin be the native product of Presbyterian Government, when exerciſed conforme to its principles; or the contrare the genuine conſequence of Prelacy, that neceſſarly reſults from its conſtituent & preſerving cauſes? Which were no great labour to make out. But leaving this, we humblie entreat your *Lo.* to have that patience towards us, as to ſuffer us to ſay. 1. In conformity to the principle of the Chriſtian profeſſion, it muſt be, in the confeſſion of all Chriſtians, mater of ſad regrait & lamentation, that in places, where the Chriſtian Religion is owned, zealous faithfulneſs againſt ſoul deſtroying ſins, ſhould be admited & received, as a prejudice againſt Miniſters & their Government; which ſhould commend & cry it up; yea that does endear it to all conſcientious Chriſtians, that rightly underſtand their owne Profeſſion. Muſt it not be a terrible length, this generation is gone, in declineing from the power of Religion; when that, which is its excellency & glory in the ſight of God & good men, is become the occaſion & mater of its diſlike & reproach? Can there be a fuller evidence and diſcovery of the predomining & prevailing power of naturs enmity, in Profeſſours, over the life of true godlineſs; and their being given up to the luſts & ſinful inclinations of their owne hearts, that thus ſets them in oppoſition to the meanes, appointed for their delivery from the

dominion & power of damning sins: whither are we gone, and what may we expect will be the hight of our defection, and the judgment of it, if Professours put themselves in such a plaine & open professed contradiction to their Christian Profession? 2. Let not your *Lo.* think, we say this with an intention to justify any failing, in this mater, cõmited by any of our perswasion, that shall be made appear to be such from the Word of God, & our Professed principles. And although we cannot condemne all the instances, that are now disapproved by our antagonists; yet we grant, there were considerable escapes, in preaching & exercise of discipline, which were the effects of imprudence & passion in some, and of wordly inclinations & designes in others of corrupt minds; who to raise themselves in this world, and for that end, to gaine the favour of persons of leading influence & power, keept no measure, but rune to strang hights of zeal against some sins, while they connived at others; but seing by their compliances with the cryed-up cause of these times, they do now declare to all the world that they were never of us; how unjustly are their wicked follies imputed to our Government and way. But for all the instances given in against us, and the hideous cry raised after them; yet we must say, the greatest and most common failing among Ministers, was in the

defect,

defect, in that the moſt were not ſo diligent, faithful & impartial, in the application of the word to the ſins of the times, perſonal rebukes & cenſures, as they ſhould have been; as (alas) was too viſible & obſerved by many; for which now they bear their rebuke, in that many of thoſe are now become their cruel perſecutors, to whom they were ſinfully ſparing & indulgent. Moreover, let it be granted, that many of theſe inſtances were in the exceſſe unjuſtifiable; yet if the conſtitution and principles of Presbyterian Government were not for, but againſt them, it cannot be charged with theſe: they muſt be the faults of the perſons, and not of the Government; otherwiſe all Governments muſt be condemned, as guilty of all the mal-adminiſtrations, commited by Governours; which all acknowledg to be abſurd? But when any of the contrare minded ſhall demonſtrat theſe to be the native product of our principles for doctrine and Government, they ſhall be conſidered, & according to the conviction they give of the ſame, they ſhall be acknowledged. But will your Lo. be pleaſed, to conſider the ſad & deplorable extreme our antagoniſts are run into, who medle not with any ſort of ſcandals, except a few and theſe in the meanner & lower degree of perſons, over looking all in the more opulent and great; which hath encouraged wickedneſs to

life,

lift up its head, and to diffuse its self thorow all ranks without control, to the infecting of this Church with all kindes of scandals; which, no doubt, will resolve either into the total ruine of the Protestant Religion, or els in sad desolating judgments, on this land; and if it come this length (which we earnestly beg of the Lord he would prevent, by pouring out of a Spirit of repentance and reformation on us) where will be our advantage by *Prelacy*, that is now so much extolled?

Therefore not loving to trouble your *Lo.* any further, we shall adde but this humble and earnest request; that your *Lo.* would be pleased, to make some due and just representation of the true State and low condition of this Church, unto his *Maj.* who (we hope) through your *Lo.* intercession, will, in his wisdome and clemency finde out some just expedient, for relieving of this Church of her oppressing evils, under which she groans; and undoing of these heavy burdens, that lye on us: for which we are your *Lo.* humble petitioners, and had been so alittle sooner, if we had not been discouraged by lawes anent Church maters, that seems to us, to close all door of accesse to his *Maj.* and your *Lo.* for representing our just greivances this way. If we may not obtaine this reasonable and just request (as we suppose) there is not another refuge left us, but to referre our cause to the righteous tribunal of the just and almighty God, where your *Lo.* and we will stand on even ground, and have judgment passed without respect of persons.

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An Apology for, or vindication of the oppreſſed perſecuted Miniſters, and Profeſſors of the Presbyterian Reformed Religion, in the Church of *Scotland*, emitted in the defence of them, and the cauſe for which they ſuffer.

The Introduction.

IT *is not unknown* (*as we ſuppoſe*) *to the Churches of Chriſt, in the Iſlands of* Britain *and* Ireland, *and other parts of the Chriſtian World, what perſecutions, upon the introduction of Prelacy in the Year* 1662. *the partie, called* Presbyterian, *hath ſuffered, eſpecially in the Church of* Scotland, *and yet lyeth under, throw the implacable and violent rage of their adverſaries, the Prelates and their adherents: who having got the Civil powers on their ſide, have prevailed to the enacting of ſuch lawes, that theſe* (*who from the conſcience of duty towards God, and ſenſe of the obligations of their Covenants and Oaths, lying on them and theſe Churches, cannot comply with, nor give obedience unto*) *are not only expoſed to bitter and hard ſufferings, for a conſiderable time, loaded with all ſort of reproach, and repreſented as ſeditious and diſloyal to Authority, contrary to their known principles and actings. It is not the deſigne of this* [illegible] *to deſcend into the conſideration of the ſufferings, nor yet to lay any Odium on*

prejudice of their juſt authority; (as the righteous judge of the world knowes, and we hope will make manifeſt in due time) both to clear ſome Neceſſary truths and duties; and to vindicat ſome of our practiſes, from the unjuſt aſperſions of adverſaries; who by lies and unjuſt repreſentations of our principles and carriage, do publikly and privatly defame and miſrepreſent to Authority and others, our behaviour under the preſent courſe of affairs: an artifice they have uſed of old and late, for ingratiating of themſelves, and their intereſts, into the favour of our Rulers, and ſharpening of the edge of perſecution againſt us; in which they have had no ſmal ſucceſſe. If it were not for the Intereſts of truth and Religion, which, through the hot conteſts and debates of their times (actuated by ambition and covetouſneſs, on the one hand, and the love of truth, on the other) are in hazard to ſuffer ſhipwrack, we incline rather to keep ſilence; and to poſſeſſe our ſouls in patience under the preſent violence, uſed againſt us; (as our too much ſilence hitherto does ſufficiently witneſs) but finding that the intereſts of the Goſpel, and the concerns of immortal ſouls, are ſtruck at, and are like to ſuffer no ſmall prejudice through our ſilence, we have put on a reſolution, to give to the Chriſtian world an account of the grounds of our practiſes, for which, we are this day, ſo much reproached and perſecuted. And ſeing there is no acceſs in the ordinarie road, to give a due and juſt information of our caſe, to our Superioures, by ſupplications, petitions and remonſtrances, (allowed by ſcripture and natures light) by reaſon of the influence & power of our adverſaries; we cannot but expect that much juſtice from all, as to excuſe us for doing of this, in this way, which the vindication of truth, and of ourſelvs for its ſake, in the preſent juncture, makes very neceſſary: for finding, in the preſent ſtate of things, that we cannot, without betraying of the

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Gospel, and of our immortal souls, (for which as Ministers and Christians we are called to contend, on all hazard paines) keep any longer silence; but that we must give warning to all, of the imminent dangers, that threaten Religion, in its purity and power; we look upon it, as our indispensible duty, by clearing truths and practises (so much now condemned) to endeavour the prevention, and recovery of all from the snares, they are in danger of, and engaged into: wherefore, in all Christian sobriety and humility, we crave leave, to open our hearts and mindes to all, as they are concerned in our case. 1. Anent the cruel and iniquous procedour used against us. 2. Our practise of preaching and hearing of the Gospel of Christ, by Ministers and people, yet adhering to the covenanted work of Reformation, in opposition to Prelacy and Erastianisme. 3. Our not approving nor allowing of the late indulgence, although, as to the preaching part of it, it hath been by some of us, in so far practised. 4. and lastly, anent the Supremacy Ecclesiastical, as it is now established in his Majesties person, and sensed by law.

SECT. I.

Of the act of Glasgow, with raisons why submission could not be given to Prelacy.

WE love not to insist on the first, and if it were not connected with some other things, that more concerne the cause, and touch upon it, then any outward interest of ours; we would incline rather to bury it, in perpetual oblivion, then thus to talke the shame of past and present actions; the mentioning of which cannot but reflect on some, whose reputation is dear

to us, then they will readily admit themselves to beleeve: But we must not decline, what in the present case is necessarie for vindicating of our righteous cause, struck at and wounded through our sides. We shall only touch a few instances of many, that might be produced, and are yet fresh in the memories of this generation; and we fear (if Historians prove impartial) will speak to the disgrace of these times, in the succeeding ages. As *first*, That almost unparalleled Act of the Councel at *Glasgow Octob.* 1662. whereby at one stroke, a number of Ministers above 300, without all legal precedour, were violently cast out of their livelyhoods, and inhibited the exercise of their Ministery; and thereby a great number of Congregations laid desolate. And for any thing known to the Councel at their making and publishing of this Act, all the Ministers of the Church of *Scotland* (a very few excepted) might have been thrust out and ejected thereby, and so the whole Church laid waste, and dispossessed of the Gospel and it's ordinances; in which condition, shee might have continued long enough, to such a hight of prejudice and loss, which the much-cryed-up good of *Prelacy* could never have compensat, in this or the following age. Was it not evident (from the astonishment, that the disappointment of the designe of this Act had on our Rulers, in those that did not obey the law in subjecting to Prelacy, on it's emission) that it was passed without mature deliberation, and was influenced by the impatient Zeal [illegible] violent instigation of the Prelats, to the precipitation of all Counsels, which since hath been lamented, & not little regrated by many of that party, who have never, [illegible] fallen on right methods & wayes of cureing

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the distempers & confusions caused by this act to the Church of God amongst us. We remember of none like to this, but that of the *Interim* of *Germany*, in the time of *Charl.* the *V.* A precedent, we think, that should not have been imitated, by any Christian protestant State, considering it's wicked designe, & bad success to it's contrivers.

At the passing of this Act of Councel, it was not unknown to all, that the Ministers ejected by it, were, for the generality of them, young men, educated and indoctrinat in the Presbyterian principles; neither could it, in rational judgment, be supposed, that in such a sudden and unexpected revolution of affairs, in Church and State, persons of any conscience, could so suddenly be moved to change the Principles they had received, and so long been in the practice of, without the least offer of any convincing reason to the contrary. In this case, to inflict so heavy a punishment on Ministers and Congregations, without any endeavours previously used, for their information, looks to be a streach, beyond the bounds of charity and justice, which, according to all laws, Divine, ecclesiastick and civil, allows time and patience, in dealing with persons, erring in the matters of God, for bringing them to the conviction of their errours, before the passing & inflicting of a sentence; a piece of justice observed in the darkest times of Popery, and hottest persecutions on the Church of God, as is evident from the records of these times. 2. Besides, in all executions of laws on persons found transgressing the same, there useth to preceed the sentence, and infliction of the penalty, a judicial trial and conviction of the transgression, the natural right and priviledge of all subjects, observed in all well governed States in the World, whether Chris-

stian or heathenish: For, in the administration of justice to the subjects, there ought to be an application of the law to persons, supposed guilty of it's violation, by a judicial sentence, not only adjudging them to the penalty, but declareing the guilt, as the meritorious cause of such punishments; which cannot be done, without a judicial trial and conviction, by confession or witnesses: But in our case no such thing was observed, no not so much as an hearing allowed us.

Moreover, in this act, the Ministers of the Gospel were, under highest paines, discharged and forbidden the exercise of their Ministery, which they had received from the Lord, and not from the State; and this antecedent to any Church sentence, or ecclesiastical conviction of guilt, deserving so heavy a punishment; an encroachment on Church power, without a precedent in this Church, and in all others, except that of the *Interim* of *Germany*, condemned, on that very head, both by Popish and Protestant writters, as a reatch beyond the Limits, set to the Magistrats power, in the word of God. Is there not here a Punishment, formally ecclesiastick, inflicted by the Magistrat without owning of the Church, to whom the inflection of such punishments does properly belong; and by whom they were, time out of minde, exercised? But this with other Acts of the like nature, which followed, was suitable to the basis and foundation, on which the new superstructure of Church government was founded and built, the Supremacy. How visible is it from this act, the way used for bringing in of prelacy, the frame of the Acts of Parliament, anent it and the *Supremacy*, and the procedour in executing of the same; that

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the designe was not only to subject the Church wholly to the State, but to rob her of all power; which the prelates perceiving, laboured to help in their after cutting of Ministers not comprehended in this Act; some of them complaining, that Ministers should be exautorated by the Magistrat, without any Church sentence preceding: but more of this afterwards.

But supposing, this to be within the compasse of the Magistrats power; yet how unproportionat was the penalty to the alleaged crime? if there had been heresy in doctrine, or scandals in life & conversation, a justification might have been made of this sentence; but for simple non-conformity to prelacy, that had been by Church & State exploded from amongst us, as an high corruption in the government of the Church, and its reentry barred with the solemnest Covenants and oaths, that ever any Church or Nation came under: we say, for such a crime in such a case, to take from Ministers, as men, their lively hoods; and as Ministers, their Ministery (dearer to them then their lives) is a punishment, when weighted in the ballances of equitie and justice, much beyond (we are sure) the demerit of the cause; especially considering, that the Persones imposeing conformity, and punishing others so severely for refusing it, were the same (for the most part) that had made and enacted lawes, severe enough against it. What? is prelacy a jewel of so much worth, that the Church of God cannot be well without it? have we not found the contrare, from the experience of past and present times? Although we should be judged uncharitable in this, yet we must say it, that they, who see not this, do either shut their eyes throw carnal interest, or wilfull [illegible]

against all evidence; that not only Scripture but the effects of Prelacy in this Church, affords to all men; Or els fight against their light. If we take our measures, by the true interests of the Church, or these things, wherein her true welfare does consist, we shall undoubtedly and undeniably see, that prelacy is not of that worth and use, to the Church of God, as to inflict such grievous punishments on Non-compliers with it: sure we are, soundness of doctrine, purity of worship and holiness of life have flourished in this Church, without it; and since its erection, these have come under a sad decay.

Obj. But many place the demerite of these severe punishments, in the disobedience to the lawes establishing Prelacy; the now great cry of these engadged in the present course, for justifying of all enormities, committed in the administrations of government?

Ans. To this we say, first, that all Divines and Lawyers assert, if non-obedience be seperated from contempt of authority, (as in many cases it may be) that the demerit of disobedience, is not rigourously to be pursued with punishments, especially of so high a nature, as these inflicted on us, for meer non-conformity; and the reason they give, is because, there are and may be such things in non-obedience, as will, to righteous judges, not only alleviat the guilt thereof, but discharge it from disobedience, let be contempt of authority; as invincible ignorance, inability, fits of passion, the tendencie of the thing commanded, in some cases, to the everting of the end of the law, which in such cases, is presumed not to be the will of the Law-makers) the disposition & profession of persons in obedience manifested, in all others things &c. if

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our known and professed principles, extant in our publict confessions and treatises on this head, with our actions in all other matters relating to authority, be admitted and beleved, we will have as much to say, for freeing of our non-obedience to lawes, in this matter, from contempt of authority, as any. Give us the just liberty of our Religion, in preferring of God, our absolute and Supream Soveraigne, to all others; and in yeelding to him that obedience, he requires of us in his word, and none shall be found more obedient to Authority, in all things that do not intrinch on this. We do solemnly professe, and in the sight of the alseeing God, who searches the hearts and reins, that this, and this only, is the cause, why we cannot give obedience, to the lawes establishing prelacy; for upon all the search, we have made, we cannot find a warrant for it in the word of God, that perfect rule of Religion and Righteousnes; but find it contrare unto & against the precepts and institutions of Christ Jesus, anent the government of his house. This being our perswasion, we are not able to evite the force of these obligations of our Covenants and Oaths, made to God and one another, against it; to the strick observation of which, we are by commands and threathings contained in the word, most indispensibly bound, and from which tyes, no humane power can loose us. Is it not a sad matter in this case, that we meet with no other thing from any, for satisfying our consciences, and bringing us the length of cheerful obedience in this thing, but the cry law, law; which, in the matters of God, can be no sure bottome to our consciences; seing we as Christians are under a law, antecedent and superior to that of mens.

Secondly. Where the guilt of disobedience is truly found, yet the sentence passed against it, ought cheefly to respect the matter of the disobedience, and according to the quality and circumstances of it, the punishment should be proportionated: there are no divines or lawyers (that we know of) but hold this; and it is, beyond dispute, evident from the judicial lawes of the *Iews*, enacted and established by God himself, for the administration of justice, in that Common-wealth: for the guilt of disobedience being alike, in all deeds contrare to law, disobedience in smaller matters should have as heavy punishments inflicted on the contraveeners, as in greater; which all acknowledge to be a strange solecisme in government, contrare to all natural equity and justice, the basis and ends of government.

Thirdly. And that our non-obedience to lawes erecting and establishing prelacy, is so high a crime in itself, as to deserve such punishments, as have been statute and execute upon us, we do not yet see: especially while we consider. (1.) The little evidence (as hath been said) for it in the word of God; Some of that party have racked their witts, for finding out its divine right and institution, as *Ioseph Hall*, and some others; but with so little successe, as hath forced many of them, to quite that plea, and take them to arguments of another nature. (2.) The confessions of some, who plead for the usefulnes of prelacy, to the *well*, but not to the *being* of the political Ministerial Church; which they grant may be such without it, as most of the former opinion yeeld. (3.) Others that lean not to Scripture for the right of prelacy in the Church, found it upon Ecclesiastick constitutions, canons & customes; which they take

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to be the Interpreters of Scripture in this debate; as *Dounhame* and others with him, that make most use of antiquity. (4.) Others more moderat, pious and more learned, then the rest, do so clip its wings, that they bring it to a meer constant presidency, in the meetings of presbyters, for government; making it a pure nonentity, as to what is established by law amongst us, and for which they bring no Scripture: of which judgment was that godly and learned Bishop *Usher*, who, for knowledge in all the controversies of the Church, especially in Antiquity, was *Nemini secundus*. (5.) Some others argue for it, as a matter of indifferency, that may be received or rejected, as Churches and States see it fits their interests; asserting, that all its authority and goodness depends upon and flowes from the power, that brings it in, thus *Stillingfleet*. (6.) Some of that party have fallen on a new method, for justifying its divine right (being straitened, as it seems, with our arguments, and the weakness of their owne) alleadging that Presbyters were not institute in Scripture times, by the Apostles; & that all Ministers, mentioned in the Scriptures, were Bishops, in the sense controverted, as Doctor *Hammond*; but his evidence from Scripture and antiquity, is so dim me, that (for any thing we know) he hath gained few, or none, to follow him in this. (7.) These of the court party, place all its goodness in the authority & lawes establishing it; granting it signifies nothing antecedently to these. (8.) If we shall consider prelacy, and view it in its several parts, as it is by law constitute and setled amongst us, and bring them to the test and rule of the word of God, that we may give judgment of them, according to it; how little of prelacy will be found to be of divine right, even in

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the confeſſion of our adverſaries: of all that have appeared on the feild for its defence, there is none, that ever pleaded ſcriptural inſtitutions, precepts and inſtances, for the Lordly titles, eminencies, and wordly dignities of the Prelats, that are now annexed to their office; nor yet for their civil places and power in the State; nor for their ſeveral orders, and degrees, as *Primats*, *Metropolitans*, *Archbiſhops*, *&c:* Or for the like among their dependents, in their numerous and various diſtinctions of degrees of ſuperiorities, and ſubordinations; as *Vicars*, *Chancelors*, *Deans*, *Archdeacons*, *Subdeans*, *Deacons*, *Parsons &c.* whoever hitatherto did put pen to paper, and contended for the divine right of prelacy, never opened a mouth to plead either Scripture or antiquity for theſe (except Doctor *Hammond* who argues for *Archbiſhops:* and what is prelacy, in its conſtitution amongſt us, without them; The only thing debated betwixt us and our Antagoniſts anent it, is the ſuperiority of one Paſtor over other Paſtors, and their reſpective congregations, to the probation of which, from ſcripture and pure Antiquity, there are two things, that muſt of neceſſity be made out from theſe: firſt the ſole power of Ordination and Juriſdiction, and ſecondly Dioceſan Churches made up of ſeveral leſſer Churches and their reſpective Paſtores and Officers: in theſe does the eſſential difference lye (in their owne confeſſion) betwixt Biſhops & Presbyters or ordinare Paſtores; none of which two hath been proven from ſcripture and antiquity. And if that, which differences prelats from other Paſtores of the Church, be not made to appear from ſcripture, how will their office be of divine right; and how can it be expected from us, who are under ſuch ſtrait divine engadgments

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against it, that we should comply therewith; and submit to the lawes, injoining conformity thereto. We complaine of the subdolous and uningenuous way of our opposites, in this debate, who always keep in generals, and never condescend on the particular differences betwixt Prelates and Ordinare Pastores; nor undertake to prove these: and the truth is they cannot: for they are forced to confesse, that it is clear from antiquity, that Presbyters have ordained, sometimes in conjunction with Bishops, and sometimes without them: And for diocesan Churches with one fixed pastor overseeing other Pastores and their flocks, we cannot meet with the least probable evidence, from scripture and pure antiquity: we find no argument from our adversaries concluding this. It is empty arguing to say; there were Apostles, there were Priests and Highpriests in the Old Testament; there were seven Angels in the seven Churches of *Asia*; therefore there must be Bishops now: If they will from scripture make out the difference now assigned betwixt Prelats & Presbyters, in these instances of the Apostles, Priests and Angels, we shall yeeld the cause. Let none therefore blame us, in holding to this as a necessare consequence of our Antagonists succumbing in the probation of these things; that a parity among the Ministers of the Gospel, in point of power or office, is of divine right; for if in the institution of the Ministery, there be alike power given to all called thereto, there can be no superiority of one above another by divine right. (9.) It is a question much debated among the Popish schoolmen, and in which they are not agreed to this day; whether Prelacy be an order or office distinct from that of Presbyters, or only a different degree of the same

with Presbyters, including no power formally distinct from theirs: which last opinion asserts, that all power, acclaimed by the prelats, is formally in Presbyters; so that by office they are empowered to, and may doe all that the prelats pretend to. How hotly and stifly was this question tossed in the Councel of *Trent*, betwixt the *Italian*, *Gallican* and *Spanish* divines? which for this cause received no decision in this Councel, but was left undetermined as before; As is to be seen from the History of the said Councel. (10.) If any will consider our adversaries arguments for prelacy, and compare them with the arguments of Papists, especially *Bellarmins* for the Papacy, they shall finde, that they plead as strongly for the Pope or an Universal Bishop to the Catholick Church, as for the Prelat or Bishop, now controverted betwixt us, as wil be made appear by a particular condescension, if our intended brevity would suffer it. We referre such as question this to the arguments of both; and upon an impartial collation of the same, we nothing doubt, but it will be manifest. Doth not the much courted and endeavoured reconciliation with *Rome* by the prelatical party, in former and later times, with their concessions to them, for making way to this agreement, speak this with full evidence? As their denying the Pope to be the Antichrist; their granting a primacy to him over the Catholick Church; their purgeing the Romane Church of Idolatry and superstition; their asserting the difference betwixt Papists and us, in doctrine, worship and government, not to be fundamental, nor on their part damnable, &c. All which discover to the world the native tendency of prelacy, and what it will (if it continue) ultimately resolve into. (11.) Do not the

the opinions of prelatists, their practises, the ways taken for bringing in and establishing of Prelacy among us, reflect upon and condemne all the reformed Churches and their divines, (except *Scultetus*) who, in their confessions, treatises & reformations conforme thereto, disclame prelacy, as no office of divine appointment? As will be evident to any that peruse them. We know there was a *Pamphlet* emitted in the beginning of prelacyes last introduction, that undertakes to prove the contrare; but it is so destitute of all evidence of truth, that we wonder exceedingly at the impudence & affrontednes of the author, in alleadging of *Calvine, Beza, Bucer &c.* for prelacy; who in their practise and writings have argued and debated against it. Did not this Author know, that their writings are extant, and others as much versed therein as himself? But the unjust know no shame. (12.) As prelacy or prelatical government, in its constitution and exercise, is a compound of additions to the Word of God, which for want of its authority we reject; so presbytery or presbyterian government, in the confession of our Oppolites, is, in all its parts, of divine institution or right; which we offer to make out from scripture and the concessions of our Antagonists, who first yeeld all our Church Officers (except Ruling elders) to be of divine appointment, (Doctor *Hammond* only excepted) granting, that presbyters or ordinare Pastores and Deacons, to be institute by the Apostles, and alwayes used in the Church to this day: theylikewise grant the power of ordination and jurisdiction in Presbyters, all of late. As also the meetings of Pastores lesser and greater for goverement and discipline, and all the particularities of power anent these, asserted by and formerly exercised among

among us. We think ſtrange of *Stillingfleet*, in denying of Presbytery to be of Divine inſtitution, who yeelds all we ſeek; for if all the former be of Scriptural inſtitution and practiſe, muſt it not be of divine right, even as to its forme? We cannot forbear to declare our reſentments to the world, of the high indignities done to our Royal and great *Maſter*, *Chriſt Jeſus*, and his bleſſed word, the holy Scripture; in that. 1. The forme of the government of his houſe is aſſerted to be mutable, at the pleaſure of men, and made capable of any forme they pleaſe to aſſigne to the ſame. Was it ever heard in the world, that the forme of any government was taken from the Officers thereof, and not from the Supream head, in whom the Legiſlative power is lodged? All that ever treated of governments, and ſpoke to their different forms, did always found their forms on the head, and not on the Officers of it? Is not *Chriſt Jeſus* the *Supream* and *only Head of the Church*, by divine appointment? Are not ordinare Paſtores or Presbyters found inſtitute in the word, with all the parts of their power, that we afterwards grant to them? &c Will it not then neceſſarily follow, that the forme is of divine right, both in the head and officers; which is truely *Monarchicall*, and not alterable at the will of any? 2. For making way to this, the ſufficiency and perfection of the holy Scriptures, as to matters of obedience and practice in the Church, is denied, and thereby the fundation of the Proteſtant Religion is ſhaken. How inconſiſtent is this with their granting the perfection of the Scriptures, in maters of faith? For if all maters of obedience be firſt and primarily Maters of faith, muſt not they be perfect in theſe alſo? How our

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Oppoſits will defend our arguments for the perfe-ction of the Scripturs, in matters of faith and manners, againſt the Papiſts (who in this ſpeak more conſequentially then the Prelatiſts) and maintaine the former aſſertion, is unintelligible to us. For our arguments plead as much and as ſtrongly for their perfection, in the one, as in the other. But muſt it not be a deſperat cauſe that needs ſuch a prop to ſupport it? (13.) In the laſt place, We humbly offer the following particulars to be conſidered by all; nothing doubting that, when they are duely and ſeriouſly weighted. it will ſoone appear that our exceptions againſt Prelacy, are not light and groundleſs. As 1. There is no good to the Church and immortal ſouls attainable by Prelacy, that may not be win at without it. It is a ſure truth, that every ordinance of Divine inſtitution hath it's proper good to the Church, in order to which, as it's end, it was appointed by Chriſt, which is not eaſily reachable by other ordinances: As will appear to any on a particular condeſcenſion: for as there is nothing defective in divine inſtitutions; ſo there is nothing redundant and ſuperfluous. Now we deſire to know, what is that good to the Church and immortal ſouls, that cannot be obtained without Prelacy? let our Antagoniſts give inſtances. If they think that ordination and jurisdiction is the good that the Church hath by prelacy, we offer to prove from Scripture and antiquity (as hath been done before us without a reply, yea and granted by many of them) that Presbyters have the power of ordination and jurisdiction; and the truth is, it was never queſtioned by any, but yeelded by all, till of late; for we have not only inſtances in Scripture and antiquity, for Presbyters exerciſing ordination and jurisdiction; but

the reaſon, that all gave for it, was, that the miniſtery conferred by ordination, conſiſting of the power of order and jurisdiction, as it's integral conſtituent parts, perſons ordained receive the power of both: If this be a truth, why may not the Church have theſe by Presbyters, as much to her advantage and benefite, as by Prelats? But ſome ſay, there can be no unity or peace in the Church without Prelacy. The contrare is evident from the Churches experience, in former & later times; for as the Church was never more rent, and filled with contentions and ſchiſms, then under & by Prelates, of which there are innumerable inſtances in hiſtory; ſo there hath been much flouriſhing, unity and peace, under Presbyters, in Churches that wanted Prelats; as is to be ſeen in the preſent caſe of the reformed Churches, and will be evident to any that is acquainted with and ſeen in the records of the Church: what unity & peace hath the Churches of *Britan* and *Ireland* beyond other reformed Churches? Yea is there not more of theſe among them, then is with us, at this day? But what ſayes unity and peace in the Church, if they have not truth and righteouſneſs for their cement and foundation, which are ſeldome the attendents of Prelacy? But ſome place the good of Prelacy, in the overſight and inſpection, it takes of Miniſters and their reſpective flockes (of which they uſe to boaſt much;) But reaſon and experience do fully convince, and leave us beyond all Doubt, that this good, is as eaſily and better wrought at, by Presbyters, in their aſſociated and presbyterated meetings, leſſer and greater, then by prelats: what can prelats do in this, that may not, and hath not been done by Presbyters, to the great benefite of the Church? as is manifeſt from the experience of

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this Church in preceeding times, and now not alittle confirmed by the contrare? Moreover in the act of restitution *Parl.* 1. S. 2. Act 1. it is given for one Reason, inducing to the bringing in and establishing of prelacy among us, that it is most suitable to Monarchy. What good this does or can bring to the Church, we cannot divine: we wish it had been instanced in the foresaid act: we know, the government of the Church, considered in its due latitude and extent, according to the presbyterian principles, is truely and properly Monarchical; for is not Christ Jesus the Supream and immediat head of the Church; and do not her officers act in her government in an immediat dependance upon and subordination to Him, as her King? So that if the Churches government being Monarchical be the good intended and meant, in this expression, it is as much attainable without prelacy, as by it; but we suppose, that this is not the good understood. *Next*, if by suteableneſſe to Monarchy, be meant, that kinde of Authority and Dominion in Church officers, in and over the Church, that is exercised by kings and Monarchs, and hath been assumed by prelats, since ever they appeared in the Church; this is expressly discharged and forbidden to Church officers in her government, *Matth.* 20, 25. *Luk.* 22, 25. How much Emperours, Princes Kings and States have smarted by this dominion, is known in history. Some say, it is the superiority and subordination of Church officers and judicatories, that is understood in this act; This may be had, and hath been attained in the Church, under presbyterian government; both as to officers and judicatories; the Pastour is superior both to Elders and Deacons &c. the classicall presbytery is

above the congregational eldership; & the provincial synod above the presbytery &c. *Obj.* there is not the superiority of one above the rest; *Anſ.* but what good doth this either to Church or State? we know it hath brought much evil to both, but never any good, that might not have been wine at, yea and was not actually attained, without it; they that judge otherwiſe, are bound to give inſtances, which we earneſtly beg they will doe: we know this brought forth the *Pope*, and did midwife *Antichriſt* into the Chriſtian world. But the thing, we ſuppoſe, that is truly intended, is the bringing of the Church into a ſlavish dependence upon, and ſubjection to the Magiſtrat; for which, we confeſſe, prelacy is every way fitted: how excellently did it ſerve the *Pope*, in eſtabliſhing of his Dominion, and in bringing and keeping of all in ſubjection to him? and albeit ſince the reformation, the prelats changed their head, in taking on the Magiſtrat in the roome of the *Pope*, yet they retaine their uſe, which exceedingly endears them to worldly Princes, that affect domination in the houſe of God, but (as ſhall be proven afterwards) this is contrare to the fredome of Chriſts kingdome, his abſolute ſupremacy and dominion over the ſame; and is inconſiſtent with Chriſtain princes their profeſſed ſubjection thereto; ſo that this is no good, but and evill deſtructive of the true concerns of the Church. 2. It is no ſmall diſcovery to us of the evil and corruption of prelacy, that it is much approven, allowed and cryed up by all perſones of profane, diſſolute and debauched lives (except where it croſſes their wordly interests) and the reaſon of this is obvious to all, for as corrupt and wicked nature does diſlike all that is from God, as oppoſite to its wicked inclinations and wayes; ſo it

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loves, and is in much liking with all that is friendly to, and does encourage it in theſe. Is it not viſible, that the encouragement, which flagitious and wicked perſones find for their impieties, under the wings of prelacy, is the true reaſon and cauſe, for which it is ſo liked and cryed up by ſuch? In this it is contrare to Presbytery in its due and faithfull exercise, which hath been, and yet to this day, is hated for its impartialitie, ſtrickneſs and ſeveritie againſt all ſorts of ſcandal, in all ranks of perſons high and low: for this we appeal to the general ſenſe and obſervation of all in theſe landes: can we think that courſe to be of God, which for this reaſon is approven by the generality of the wicked? 3. Beſides this, does not the prelates oppoſition to the godly (whom in rationall charity all are bound to judge ſuch) in reproaching, oppreſſing & perſecuting of them, to a ſtrange hight of ſeverity, who in profeſſion differ only from them in a point, that depends on the meer will and pleaſure of the Magiſtrat; we ſay, does not this declare, godlines to be their quarrel, and it to be inconſiſtent with, and contrare to their intereſts, which, we are ſure, cannot be the effect of theſe means and wayes inſtitute by God in his word, whoſe end and tendency is to promove godlines, and not to perſecute and deſtroy it; as is now done. And whoever conſider the conſtitution of prelacy, the rules for its exercise (to wit, the doctrines and opinions of prelats about Church-power and government) and the hight of Dominion, they lay clame to over the Church) will ſee, that of its ſelf, it muſt be an enemy to true godlines, while it crys up its forme, and layes it ſelf out for advanceing of it, in oppoſition to its power. 4. It is received for a ſure truth, among all proteſtants, that

as the renewed nature of the Godly does hate; and is an enemy, to all that is contrare to, and destructive of true godlineſs; ſo it is the evidence and ſigne of the evil and ſinfulneſs of a cauſe, when itis disliked & oppoſed by the generality of the truly ſober, judicious and humble Godly. If we shall apply this to prelacy, as it is eſtablished and exerciſed amongſt us at this day, have we not cauſe to ſuſpect its corruption, and to judge its deſcent not to be of God? ſeing it is univerſally diſliked and hated by the truely Godly; which eminently appears in perſons converted from wickedneſs and ſin, in which they lived before converſion; what ever likeing they had to prelacy, or hatred to presbytery, immediatly upon their converſion, they drink in an averſation from and hatred of prelacy, and love to the contrare? We know, this was *objected* by *Independents* againſt presbyterians, when the controverſy about Church government was hot betwixt them? But. 1. This objection was without any true cauſe, as *Independents* were forced, afterwards, and at this day, to confeſſe; they finding upon trial, that the Godly of the Presbyterian perſwaſion, were exceedingly more numerous, then the other. 2. The difference betwixt them is very ſmall (which may be incident to perſones truly Godly, and conſiſtent with their grouth and exerciſe of godlineſs); and if there were a healing condeſcending temper, might be healed and removed; their difference lying mainly, in the authoritative ſubordination of Church judicatories and conſtitution of Churches, as to the qualities and engadgments of their conſtituent members; which when their one neſs in all other things about government, and their conceſſions to one another, in the

little they differ about, is considered, might be quickly accomodated and taken up. But it is other wayes with prelacy, in its constitution and exercise with us; which, in its effects, attendants, and the basis it is setled upon, is found to be such a corruption in the government of the Church, and inlett to others in Doctrine and Worship, that it becomes truely hateful to all the Godly, that give themselves up to the conduct and light of the Scripture, and make them their rule in the exercises of religion and godliness: far be it from us to think or say, that there is none of the prelatical gang, truely godly or pious. We know there hath been, and do beleeve, there are some such among them; but O how few, and how much have these few been looked upon, and persecuted by the rest, with an evil or jealous eye, so as they have been judged more ours, then theirs? we have not forgot the distinction, that on this head, was made in former times among the Bishops themselves, and how they were distinguished into *Puritan* and *Court Bishops*. Will not one of these two follow, either, that the generality of the Godly, (whom Christians walking according to the rule of the word must esteeme to be such) are under a strong delusion in their opinions about, and opposition to Prelacy; Or els (which is most likely for the reason formerly given) that Prelacy savours not of godliness, but in its native tendency is an enemy to it; which sayes it cannot be of God, but for trial and correction? 5. As the maine and chief qualification, the prelats require in their intrants into the ministery, and in the people they admit to ordinances, is submission to, and owning of them conforme to the present law, how insufficient and

ſcandalous ſoever they be, (which is overlooked and diſpenſed with in them); ſo their bitter oppoſition to and unceſſant perſecution of pious, able and faithful miniſters, that comply not with prelacy, declares to all, that it is not the good of the Church (that conſiſts in true knowledge and godlines) they ſeek; but the extending and eſtabliſhing of their tyrranous dominion over all, by miniſters and profeſſors ſubmitting thereto, without gainſaying of their impoſitions and commands. How contrare in this, is their way to the rules given in the word, for calling & ordaining of miniſters, 1 *Tim.* 3: 1, 2, &c. *Tit.* 1: 5, 6, &c. and the practiſe of the Apoſtle *Paul*, *Phil.* 1: 15. who rejoyced Verſ. 18. that Chriſt was preached, altho out of envy and oppoſition to him? Can that courſe be of God, which muſt be ſupported by ſuch wayes and means, that croſſe the directions and rules of the word anent Miniſters, and diſappoints the ends of the Goſpel and Miniſtery? Beleeve this who will, we cannot.

SECT. II.

What moved Miniſters to ſubmit to the act of Glaſgow: *& ſome remarks upon the* acts againſt conventicles, *and* ſuch as refuſe to depone againſt delinquents.

IT Hathbeen often *Objected* to us, both by friends and enemies; why did Miniſters and Congregations obey ſo quickly that act of the Councel at *Glaſgow*, in leaving and deſerting of one another; ſeing, by vertue of their divine mutual relation to one another,

ther, as paſtors and flocks, they were bound to cleave together, in performing and doing of all mutual duties, which by divine precepts and engadgments, they were bound to obſerve? *Anſ.* As we will not altogether juſtify our cariage, in that and ſeveral other particulars, in our way thorow theſe ſad times; (being willing to take with, and humble our ſouls for, all our imperfections and failings, that ſhall be diſcovered to us by any;) ſo there were ſome things, in the circumſtantiat caſe, that may plead for us, and alleviat the offence taken at our too general practice in that matter; As. 1. The ſuddenneſs of that act, which allowed very little or no time for deliberation, and coming to any ſolide reſolution, in a matter of ſuch weight and unuſuall practice, anent which, we had ſo few precedents in former times. All know, how puzling ſurpriſals uſe to be; and if there be not a preſent divine hand to guide and ſupport, under the power of temptation, with which ſurpriſals are ordinarly attended, all are in hazard, thorow the byaſſe of corruption, to miſcary, and in their reſolutions to turne to the wrong ſide: Miniſters and Profeſſors are men of the ſame corruptions and paſſions with others; and whatever obligations be on them for truth and righteouſneſs, and the leading of others, in the ſame; Yet throw darkneſs, the influence of corrupt affections, and temptations concurring therewith, (to which they are obnoxious as much, if not more, then others) they are ready to ſlip; in which, for the goſpels ſake, they ſhould be pitied and prayed for.

2. It had no little influence upon us in determining our reſolution to this, that our party, in our nighbouring

Churches in *England* and *Ireland*, upon the emission of an act of Parliament, disenabling all Ministers that did not conforme to Prelacy, for the exercise of their Ministry, had quit their charges, and removed themselves to other parts; not thinking it safe to themselves, their people, the interests of religion, as it then stood, to justle with Authority, in continuing their Ministery with and among the people, contrare to the new lawes made against them; while we considered this leading example, with the reasons moveing them to it, we thought ourselves as much prested therewith, as they. And, no doubt, if we had followed the contrare course, our Loyalty had been sadly reproached, and their practise made use of to aggravat our disloyal disposition (with which we had been often branded, although falsly) to a great hight of contempt; which had, we grant, too much weight with us.

3. The maine designe, we had under consideration at that time, that did most exercise our thoughts, and take them up, was, how we might be preserved from the grand corruption, *Prelacy*, that did then enter into the Church: many questions, in order to it, were debated among us, for our mutual strengthening against the assaults of our common adversaries, which we, in rational fore sight, did apprehend would come upon us; never dreaming of this course, that was followed with us; which with one stroke cut the Gordian knots of many difficulties, with which we had often grapled, in our exercises and debats. In this unexpected course of providence, clearing our way, under many difficulties, we then thought it our happines, in being rid of, and delivered

vered from many a ſnare; which, no doubt, made us give place more eaſily to the penal part of that act.

4. We being at that time unacquainted with ſuffering, and contending for the truth, in oppoſition to prevailing corruptions, in this way, itis not to be expected in rational charity, that we could come ſo ſuddenly, to that hight of reſolution and courage, as to venture on the utmoſt of hazards, that then did threaten the contraveeners of that act, and the laws upon which it was founded. *Suffering for righteouſneſs Phil.* 1: v. *laſt*, is imported to be a gift, as far above the ſtrength of nature, in our ſinful imperfect ſtate, as that of faith; as all finde when it comes to be their caſe. It is eaſy for onlookers to cenſure and condemne the failings of others, in perſecuting times, but it is not ſo eaſy to ſuffer: it requires the Spirit of power, love, and of a ſound minde, which is not quickly wine at by them, whom Chriſt calls to take up and bear his croſſe. We grant this gives no diſcharge of guilt, in not doing and ſuffering, as God cals; yet it cryes for compaſſion and forbearance from others, who, on this conſideration, ſhould be ſpareing in their cenſurs, knowing they are in the body, and liable to the like ſnares and infirmities.

5. As that deed was too much influenced with fear, and other corrupt paſſions and affections, both in Miniſters and People, (which did viſibly predominate at that time,) ſo there was a palpable deſertion on the ſpirits of all, that rendered all counſells dark and perplexed, and in all deliberations, inclined to that which was freeſt from ſuffering, and poſitive compliance with *Prelacy*. Altho this doeth not diminish

diminish sin, nor warrant any sinful neglect, nor give any true ground of excuse for it; yet it cals for charitable constructions from others, where sincerity is apparent in the maine; as then it was to the conviction of all; yea to the refuting of these hard, unchristian, and bitter censures of many, who judged our former professions of Zeal for the work of reformation, in preceeding times, to have flowed from a corrupt byasse to the world and the things of it, discovered, we grant, in too many, formerly seeming Zealots, by their compliances at that time; from whom they tooke their measures, in judging of others.

6. It is to be adverted, and ought to be of great weight, in the consideration of this busines, that Ministers, consulting their congregations, especially the godly and judicious among them, were advised to lye by for some time, and the truth is, they seemed as unwilling to venture on the hazards of suffering, that threatned all, as Ministers. This we know was the reason, that most determined not a few, to that resolution and practice: and what could Ministers do in this case, especially, in so sudden a revolution, anent which they had the leading example of others, in other parts of the Iland?

Notwithstanding of all these, and much more, that might be said for charitable constructions of Ministers and Congregationes practice in this, at that time; yet we judge it the infirmity and sin of Congregations and Ministers, that they did not cleave to one another as Pastores and flocks. We doe not plead for Ministers keeping to the accessories of the Ministery, as kirks, stipends, manses, glebs, &c. which

which was, by divine precept, their right, but not in their power to hold; but we assert it was sin, that they continued not in the exercise of the Ministery, pastoral oversight of the flocks, keeping up the government of the Church, we had been in the possession of; and peoples not adhering to their Ministers, in hearing, and receiving of ordinances from them, and not affording them all due incouragement and maintenance; all which was done by Ministers and Churches, in times of sorer persecution then ours.

If the rigour and severity, that by this act, and its full execution, with others that followed thereon, for a considerable time, (which we forebear to mention) had ceased, and gone no furder, we would have looked on all, as little, and laboured to have borne the same, with that patience, meekness and resolution, that becomes Ministers & Christians, professing the name of Christ Jesus: but the engines and devices, that afterwards were set on foot, as the *High commission*, and several unchristian & illegal practises; with the over violent pressing of the people to a conformity in their capacity; with such illegal and inhumane usages by military force, (which alone without any stated and formed designe, gave the rise to that insurrection, in the Year 1666. and the blood that followed thereon, to the the full conviction of our Rulers, who then searched unto the bottom of that affaire) were straines so high, that cannot be justified by the most extended rules of Christian moderation and equity, that Rulers are bound to follow, in the exercise of government; although this heat of violence, was for some time,

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a little cooled with a shour of blood, and other dangerous consequences like to ensue; yet afterwards, fuel being by the *Prelats* brought and administrat unto it, it againe begins to take fire, and to break forth into strange kinde of laws, made (as it seems) to give a legal face to its proceedings; which in its former height it wanted; the the bounds of which it cannot yet keep, but (according to its genious) over the hedge it leaps, and gives a straine beyond these. It would be tedious to take an exact view of all the particular lawes made against us, by which, the foundation of our past and present sufferings have bin laid, and are like to be continued: therefore we shall only give instance in a few, from which, we may take our measurs, judging of the rest.

As, *first*, *Parl. 2. Carol. 2. Session 2. Act. 5.* intituled, *an act against conventicles*: As this act condemns all assemblies, convocations and meetings of the subjects, not expressly warranted of his majesty; (which will make many meetings and convocations of the subjects, now in use, illegal and unlawful) so by consequence, reflects on the meetings, and assemblies, that Christ Jesus while here, his Apostles, Ministers and Christians held, in the primitive times; who not only keeped their meetings without, but against the acts and edicts of the magistrat, in these times: for if it be laid downe for a foundation in government, that the only right of convocating the subjects is proper to the Magistrat, what ever be the causes, occasions and ends of them; then the Apostles, Ministers, and professours will be found transgressors and enemies to government; who, although inhibited and discharged from meeting, yet did not

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forbear to aſſemble themſelvs for worſhip and government. What a miſerable ſtrait are we brought to, that the meetings of the Lords people, now called *Conventicles*, cannot be condemned, but on the ſame grounds, the aſſemblies of the Church in perſecuting times, muſt be judged dangerous, unlawful & ſeditious? But this is not the worſt; for in this act not only preaching and expounding of ſcripture, by Miniſters of Chriſt Ieſus, (although in a family beſide their own) is judged to make a conventicle and an unlawful meeting; but prayer alſo (a common duty of Chriſtianity,) is declared to be of the ſame force; ſo that no nonconforming Miniſter or any other may pray together, on any occaſion, or for any cauſe what ſoever, but they ſhall be reputed keepers of conventicles, and liable to the penalties adjudged by this law to ſuch. Is prelacy come to this height of oppoſition to godlineſs, that it cannot ſtand and be ſecured, except the worſhip of God in Chriſtian ſocieties be laide aſide, and its exerciſe diſcouraged (to which there needs no ſuch incitments in theſe times, the generality of profeſſors being prone enough of themſelvs to prove negligent and ſlack in this matter) under the odious names of *Conventicles*, and by ſuch penalties againſt them? Are we ſuch odious abominable creatures, that none muſt joyne in Chriſtian communion with us, in theſe means and duties of worſhip, that are of common obligation on all Chriſtians; but it muſt be forborne and laid aſide? or if we once open a mouth to and for God, in any ſociety; we ſhall bring ourſelves and others under the hazard of ſo ſevere penalties, which, in the purſuance of this law, have been inflicted on ſome, to the aſtoniſh-

ment of its hearers? But moreover all ſuch meetings, beſide the imputation of ſedition and other horrid evils, with which they are branded, are repreſented, as the ſeminaries of ſeparation and rebellion; a charge, if true, that maketh them meritorius of far heavier punishments, then ſome of theſe decreed againſt them: but from whence can this come? Not from the nature of theſe exerciſes, conſidered in themſelves, which are nothing, but the performance of ſome neceſſary commanded duties of Religion, which all know to be the greateſt means to, and cements of union and obedience, in Church and State: not from the mater that is preached and prayed; our principles for worship, doctrine, & government are known, being extant in our publict confeſſions, which are of a contrare tendency.

If any ſay, we preach principles of ſeparation and rebellion. They, who aſſert this, are bound to make it out, of which we have heard nothing as yet, and ſhould have been condeſcended on, and given for the ground of this act, and not the performance of theſe truly religious exerciſes, done by perſones authorized and enabled thereto, by the commands of God. We require of all engadged againſt us, to do us that piece of common juſtice, they owe to all men, in the like caſe, that they will inſtance in the doctrines we preach, and in the mater we pray, wherein our meetings are become the ſeminaries of ſeparation and rebellion, if they can: when this is done, we ſhall either give a ſatisfying anſwer to the charge, or els ſuccumb to this act.

It is like, ſome place this charge, in our diſobedience to the law. Then it comes from the law and

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the Law makers, and not from theſe meetings and the perſons that keep them; for antecedent to this law they were not in themſelves ſeminaries of ſeparation and rebellion, according to this objection: and if this be the effect of the law, it had been more ſafe to have forborne it, whoſe work ſhould be, rather to prevent and remove the ſeeds of rebellion, then thus to ſowe them. But this law in its narrative ſuppons theſe meetings to be ſuch, antecedent to its enacting; but gives no hint at any reaſon for this heavy charge.

Others again fix the truth of this charge on our meetings, for our withdrawing of the people, from the allowed publict worship, and the perſons authorized by law to diſpenſe the ſame. If the act had only circumſtantiated and deſcribed ſuch meetings, as had this effect, and not taken in all religious Chriſtian fellowship in the duties of worship, ſomething might have been ſaid for juſtifying of this act, in a conformity to the principle of Church-government, now ſetled by law, without a wound to true piety; but to make all meetings of Chriſtians, wherein any part of worship is exerciſed (without an expreſſe licence from the *prelat*) ſeminaries of ſeparation and rebellion, is in effect to condemne Chriſt, his Apoſtles, Miniſters and Chriſtians, who, in oppoſition to Heatheniſme, Hereſy, Profainneſs and ſchiſme, have, under ſevere laws made againſt them, aſſembled and met together, for communion in the worship of God; whoſe aſſemblies have been accounted unlawful Conventicles, and loaded with many of theſe evils, that are now charged on ours. Dar any, profeſſing himſelf a Chriſtian, ſay, that

the meetings of Chriſt, his Apoſtles and Miniſters, in houſes and feilds, (who had the occaſion of the Synagogues, the ordinare allowed places for meeting in worship) were guilty of ſeparation and rebellion, (although charged with theſe) or did ſow the ſeeds of theſe evils? Although none will affirme this, yet we undertake to make it out, from the frame of this act, as it now ſtands. Oh that ſuch a law ſhould be found in the records of this Nation, which will ſpeak (if ever we returne to ourſelves) to the ſhame and diſgrace of theſe times. But, as to our ſeparation from the authorized publict worship, with which ſome with great confidence, brand us, we ſhall conſider it afterwards, and ſee whether they or we be the ſeparatiſts.

We forbear to ſpeak to the penalties ſtatute in this act, againſt the contraveeners of it; which on many accounts might be made to appear, to be far beyond the demerite of the crime, and an imitation of the popish cruelty, who punished the Profeſſors of the truth, with punishments equal to thoſe inflicted for treaſon; in which this act is not short, that adiudge the keepers of field Conventicles, to death and confiſcation of goods.

In the next place, it adds not alittle to our grief, under our preſent ſufferings; that although there be penal lawes againſt *Papiſts*, and other heterodox perſons, yet no notice is taken of them, nor any execution of the law upon them; yea in one act of Parl. *Caroli.* 2. *Seſſion* 2. *Act.* 7. they are exeemed from the guilt and ſeverity decreed againſt us: which ſeems ſtrange to us, when theirs and our principles, even in matters of civil government, are compared; theirs,

in the confeſſions of all *Proteſtants*, are found to be incompatible with, and ſubverſive of that obedience and allegeance, that is due from ſubjects to magiſtrats, ſuppoſed by them heretical: which was the true cauſe of the ſevere laws, made againſt them, that for ſome time, (from the beginning of the reformation) were put to ſome execution; but as to any execution now, ſlackened and and laid by, as an *almanack* out of date. Are their principles and deſigns changed, or their number any fewer? yea is it not encreaſed, beyond what they have been ſince the reformation? But poor we are laid open to the lash of the ſevere laws, enacted againſt us, and all wayes taken to crush us and our cauſe, who owne no other principles, but theſe, that are either implicitly or explicitly aſſerted, by all *Proteſtants*, which are known to the world, to be corroborative of government, and ſuch as make way for all juſt obedience from the Subject to the ſame.

To make way for the full and ſure execution of this law, there is another enacted Parl. *Caroli.* 2. *Seſſion.* 2. Act. 2. Intituled *an act againſt thoſe, who refuſe to depone againſt delinquents*; which is particularly deſigned, for comeing at full information, againſt *Conventicles* and *Conventicle keepers*; as is expreſſed in the body of that act; but ſo conceived and framed, as it anſwers to that oath *de ſuper inquirendis*, uſed by the *Papiſts* in their inquiſition; (condemned by all Proteſtant Divines, for its oppoſition to juſtice, mercy and equity) for *firſt*, no ſort of perſons are exeemed, the Father againſt the ſon, the husband againſt the wife, &c. were the relations never ſo near, no exception of them is made in this act,

which uſe to be admitted in all other crimes, except that of treaſon. *Next* by this act, the deponent (whoever he be) is oblidged to anſwer all interrogations and queſtions propoſed to him, although he hath had no previous conſideration of them, which in all other crimes uſed formerly to be allowed; that ſo the deponent might anſwer from mature and ſure knowledge, which here is not granted. What a foundation is hereby laid for the moleſtation of the ſubject? Shall we be that unmerciful and unjuſt to all men, yea to our neareſt and deareſt relations, as to reveal that of them. which, if keept ſecret, brings no prejudice to Church or State: And if revealed will ruine them, in this preſent world; and that for a mater, that antecedent to the law, is no tranſgreſſion before God; but the doing of a neceſſare duty? An invention (we muſt ſay) framed againſt the good and conſciencious, who cannot eſcape by this law; and for the encouraging of the bad to the perſecuting of ſuch, who throw the power of their luſts, are at liberty to ſay, and do, what they liſt. Are theſe the fruits of *Prelacy*, that moſt endeared it to us? Whither are we gone? Shall we thus fight againſt heaven, to reach a poor handful of perſons, that are able to do nothing, but to look up to God, and ſigh to him, for theſe evils, that, no donbt, are procureing and bringing diſmal and ſad dayes on this land? We forebear to anatomiz theſe and other acts of the like nature, and to give judgment to every clauſe and part of the ſame; but leave them to the impartial conſideration of all concerned, to whom the effects thereof may afterwards ſpeak more, then we love to utter, at this time. Only, in all humi-

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lity, we offer two things, to be obſerved (which are the obſervations of not a few) that theſe and other acts do pave the way to all ſort of cruel perſecution, if a furder declenſion in religion shall happen to follow: (which we beg the Lord in his rich mercy to this nation would prevent.) Rulers are ſubject to erre, in the matters of God, as well as others; (as the inſtances of all ages leave beyond debat;) and if others shall ariſe after us, that incline to *popery*, or any other falſe Religion, are there not lawes made to their hands by us, that will facilitat their work, and make it moſt eaſy? What have they more to do, but to reſcind ſome, very few in regaird of theſe that once were, and to execute thoſe they finde in force and on record, for the perſecuting of all opponents, to the height of cruelty. *Next* there needs no act of Parliament to this change, and introduction of another Religion: an act from the King, recorded in the Councel bookes, and ſufficiently published (which is declared to be of ſufficient force and obligation about this mater) is enabled by law to do all. An act without a precedent in this nation, when conſidered in its full latitude and extent.

From what is ſaid anent theſe acts, any may gather the true reaſons of our refuſeing the Bond (lately framed by the Councel) that takes us engaged againſt Conventicles, (as they are called) and was enforced by violence on us. Not pretending to much knowledge in the lawes, we have alwayes underſtood, bonds to be voluntare, and firſt to proceed from perſons found guilty, and ſentenced by the judge, conforme to the law; which the clemency of the Magiſtrat doeth often ſuſpend or remit, upon the guiltys offered

offered and voluntare engagment for better behaviour, in times comeing; and never required of nor impoſed on perſons, not proven nor found guilty. The truth is, if this violenting impoſition of bonds, be thus allowed and practiſed, what ground will there be thereby laid down, for the trouble and moleſtation of the ſubjects? And who can promiſe to himſelf ſecurity from the oppreſſion of others, that, out of malice or covetous deſignes, may, on any pretence, give information againſt others, altho never ſo quiet and peaceable?

SECT. III.

The Miniſters preaching and peoples hearing vindicated: and foure Objections anſwered.

HAving thus far opened our hearts, and touched at ſome things, that are truly greivous to us; not ſo much for what we have ſuffered, as for the fear of what is like to be the conſequences of the engines, framed and ſet on foot, for perpetuating ours and the Churches oppreſſions, in this and the following generations: we ſhall in the next place give an accompt of our practiſe, in preaching and hearing of the Goſpel, diſpenſing and receiving of ordinances, at and from the hands of the ejected Miniſters; the new cauſe of theſe heavy acts, ſentences and punishments inflicted on us, for the ſame: in doing of which we ſhall, firſt, in all ſinglneſs of heart, bring forth the true grounds and reaſons, binding our conſciences, to theſe practiſes, and then ſhall take off the exceptions that are moſt uſed againſt us.

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Our practiſe, in this mater, we build on ſuch foundations, that all Chriſtians, eſpecially Proteſtants, by vertue of their profeſſed ſubjection to Chriſt Jeſus, (our only King and Law giver in the houſe of our God) are bound to owne and adhere to, and from which they cannot recede, without contradicting of the ſaid profeſſion, and doing manifeſt violence to the law and word of Chriſt, the holy Scriptures, our only ſtatute and law book, in all matters of doctrine, worship and government. If on bringing our caſe to them, it ſhall be found, that our condemned practice in theſe ſtands juſtified, we hope with much aſſurance, we ſhall be acquited in the ſight of God, and in the conſciences of all that have any feeling and ſenſe of true Religion; the cenſures and talkings of others againſt us (which do not a little afflict us, for the ſad conſequences thereof to themſelves) ſhall not much move us.

Therefore *firſt*, the Miniſtery of the Goſpel being, by poſitive inſtitution and appointment from Chriſt Jeſus, as Head and King of his Church; and the perſons qualified for, and called thereto, in his own way, without dependance on the Powers of the earth, being thereby conſtitute his Ambaſſadors and meſſengers, and in ſpecial delegation ſent from him as ſuch, to preach the Goſpel, to treat with ſinners for reconciliation, and obedience; they by vertue of this inſtitution, and their ſpecial delegation or miſſion from him, are bound to exerciſe the Miniſtery & office, they are inveſted with, till it be taken from them in the way, by which he coveyed and conferred the ſame upon them. If this be a truth (as no Chriſtian that doth acknowledge the divine autho-

rity of the holy Scriptures, and ſubjecte themſelves to its light and direction, will get refuſed) will it not follow that Miniſters, in their miniſterial capacity, are firſt and immediatly ſubject to Chriſt, and not to men, in their miniſtrations of the Goſpel? for they as his Ambaſſadours, having and deriveing all their power from him, are oblidged on higheſt paines, be reaſon of their ſpecial relation to him, and their commiſſion from him, (which containes all their inſtructions) to do the work of the Miniſtery, & cannot be ſuperſeded therein by any, far leſs by them, that acknowledge Chriſts authority, in and over the Church, to be ſuperior to, and above all other authorities whatſoever. If they had their power and miſſion from men, well might they ſubmit to theſe, in taking it from them; but it not being ſo, they cannot think themſelves diſcharged of their office, but in the way, by which He conferred the ſame upon them. Beleeve us, in this lyeth a great part of our difficulty: we are ſure, Miniſters are Chriſts meſſengers; ſent by him, whom they are bound to ſerve, in preaching of the Goſpel and diſpenſing of ordinances, for the ſalvation of ſinners, from which obligation none can looſe them, but Chriſt Jeſus, their only maſter and head in this work. (2.) It does alſo natively flow from the former truth, that all, eſpecially thoſe in and of the Church, are, by vertue of Chriſts ſupereminent, ſupream, and abſolute authority, and their profeſſed ſubjection to him, indiſpenſibly bound to ſubject to the miniſterial authority and its exerciſe, in the perſons of thoſe whom he ſends, and that on the account of their miniſterial power & office, which is truely Chriſts and not theirs;

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they acting according to the inſtructions contained in their commiſſion: for they are Chriſts ſervants, ſerving him by ſpecial delegation in the Goſpel, to which they are impowered, commiſſionated, and inſtructed by him; they bear his name, ſtand in his ſtead, and repreſent him to his people, as his Ambaſſadours, being ſent by him to all ſinners, for attaining and carrying on the great ends of the Goſpel, their converſion, edification and eternal ſalvation And, ſeing it is ſo, we muſt firſt renunce Chriſts authority and dominon, over his Church, before we can refuſe and reject that power and authority of the Miniſters of the Goſpel, who are thus ſent by him to us: the truth is, the not receiving of them, is a rejecting of him; a matter that should be tenderly & ſeriouſly laid to heart by all; for it draws exceeding deep, upon all ſorts of ſinners high and low: ſo that they not depending on any other inferiour authority and power (except that by which they were ſent) their obligation to the work of the Goſpel cannot be annulled by men. Let us ſay it, in this we contend not meerly for the miniſterial authority, (that for the fountaine and ends thereof should be dear to us) but for the prerogative of Jeſus Chriſt, whoſe right it is, as King of his Church, to conſtitute & ſend Ambaſſadours in his own name; if there be any thing, that is the proper right of Soveraignity, this is one, which is the native conſequent of it, without which it cannot be: shall we allow this in point of right to earthly Soveraigns, and deny it to Chriſt, the only Head and High prieſt of our holy profeſſion?

Secondly, Moreover, Miniſters in this relation

they ſtand under to Chriſt Jeſus, have the Goſpel & its ordinances committed & intruſted to them, to be diſpenſed in his name, for the converſion and edification of ſinners; for which they are called, the *ſtewards of the myſteries of God*, 1 Cor. 4: 1. this is a talent they have received from their great Lord and maſter, of which they muſt ſhortly give an account; and which, while they have it, they are commanded in all higheſt paines to uſe, for the gaining of ſinners to him, in the ways he directs them to in his word. Now let all judge, what a ſtrait Miniſters are caſt into, in theſe times: If they forbear on the inhibitions of men, to diſpenſe the Goſpel and its ordinances to ſinners, thus committed to them, they prove unfaithful to their maſter, betray their truſt, and incurre his heavy diſpleaſure and wrath: If they anſwer their truſt and aime at faithfulneſs therein, in preaching of the Goſpel, and labouring in the work thereof, to gaine ſinners, they provock men and expoſe themſelves to all ſorts of ſuffering. But they, knowing the love and terror of the Lord, have on mature conſideration of this mater, choſen and purpoſed, in their maſter's ſtrength, to venture on the wrath of men; ſeing they cannot, in this juncture, both pleaſe their Maſter & them; reſolveing to prefer the neceſſity of ſuffering, to that of ſinne, the much commended and cryed-up choiſe of *Moſes*, in the like caſe, propoſed to all in the word for their imitation.

Thirdly, Beſides this truſt of the Goſpel, there is likewiſe the heavy truſt of immortal ſouls (to whom they are ſent) committed to them, of whom they are to give an account, and for whoſe blood they muſt anſwer, when they reſigne and give up their

ſtewardship, and lay down their office and truſt at his feet, from whom they received it. Do any think, the threats and inhibitions of men, will diſcharge them of this truſt at their maſter's hand? If they think ſo, they ſhall do well to produce ſomething from him, that will ſignify ſo much to them, without which they cannot judge themſelves exeemed from the care and overſight of ſouls; whoſe blood will cry aloud in the ears of their maſter, if they do not their part, in what he hath commanded them, for ſaveing of ſuch. We have heard of nothing yet from our Rulers to ſatisfy our conſciences in this mater, but peremptory lawes and acts, commanding them to obey the ſame, under great penalties: If we were aſſured upon clear rational grounds, that their voice and commands were the voice and commands of Chriſt Jeſus, releeving us of this preſſing burden of immortal ſouls, once laid on us, how quickly and cheerfully ſhould we obey their preſent laws: but nothing can we learne from them or any other, to aſcertane us of this. Let any, that hath any true feeling of the natural ſtate of ſouls, judge, what a cruelty it muſt be in us, to behold ſouls periſhing throw ignorance, wickedneſſe, hypocriſy & a Spirit of deluſion, in all parts of the Land, while we have the diſpenſation of the Goſpel committed to us, the mean that Chriſt hath appointed in his houſe, and uſeth to bleſs with power to the ſalvation of ſinners? Will not our neglect, in ſlighting of this, make us guilty of their blood, and acceſſory to their eternal perdition? We are aſſured of this from the word of God. While we reflect and think on this, we dar not, for fear of men and the ſufferings that threaten us from them,

...n, ſtand by and look on, but labour, as we can, in our miniſterial capacity, to prevent the ruine, we ſee coming on immortal ſoules, come of us what will.

If it be granted to us, that our obligation to obey God, in all he hath commanded us in his word, is antecedent and ſuperiour to the tyes on us for obedience to men; and that the commands of men should and ought to give place to the commands of God, (as we expect will not be denied by any, that intertaine the true notion of a God head, much leſſe by them that profeſſe ſubjection to the holy Scriptures as the only rule of faith and obedience) then our practice cannot be condemned, but muſt be juſtified, which is but a neceſſare conſequence of this truth, ſo univerſally received and cloſed with by all men; (except thoſe who have debauched their conſciences, throw the predominant love of temporal things, to a ſlavish ſubjection to the luſts and ſinful commands of others) for are not Miniſters commanded to preach the Goſpel, and the people to hear it, to aſſemble and gather themſelves together for that end? How many are the commands and precepts of God to us in his word, about this mater? In a thing ſo clear and evident through the Scriptures, it is aſtonishing to us to think, that men profeſſing themſelves Chriſtians dare iſſue out commands, ſo directly oppoſite to the commands of God, and the obligation on Miniſters and Chriſtians to obey Him, before all others. We grant, when there is another duty on foot and called to, *hic & nunc*, the Magiſtrat may, yea ought to ſupercede the practice of that, that would hinder the duty, neceſſare and called to, for the time (to which in the circumſtantiat caſe there is an obligation and

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call antecedent to the Magiſtrats command:) but lay on, and fix a ſtated ceſſation from the practice of commanded duties, on thoſe, that are under an obligation of ſerving God, in the maters forbidden by men, is beyond the power of any; to do ſo, is to frame and ſtate a war with God, and to fix ourſelves in oppoſition to him. Are not Miniſters and Profeſſors then in a puſling ſtrait, who muſt either diſobey God, or men? To them that ask us, why do we preach and hear, to the offending of our Rulers, and the cauſeing of ſo much trouble to the Countrey? Our anſwer is, God in his word hath commanded us ſo to do; they that ſuſtean the relevancy of this reaſon, but yet deny the conſequence, are obliged to give us ſomething, that takes off our obligation of obedience to God, in theſe things, in our caſe; (ſure we are they are commanded) but nothing can we meet with from the Scriptures of truth, to anſwer our arguments, and ſatisfy our conſciences, but the cry of hazard from ſome, and sharpe ſeverity from others.

Fifily, We hold according to the Scripture, that as the Magiſtrat cannot, *jure Magiſtratico*, exautorat the Miniſters of the Goſpel, or take their power and office from them; ſo he hath no power to untye the obligation on Miniſters, and Profeſſors, for obedience to God, in the leaſt of his commands. It is a principle in politicks, held by all, that no inferiour power can diſannul a power, or hinder its exerciſe, that is immediatly derived from, and dependant on a power ſuperiour, except they show a warrant from the ſame: but in this matter it is ſo: we know all will grant, that Gods ſupream authority and dominion

is ſuperiour to and above all authorities and powers, ſeing they derive the ſame from and hold them of him, who is truly *Lord of Lords, and King of Kings.* And ſeing the Miniſterial power, as to [illegible]ing and exerciſe, in the Church, is immediately from God, throw his Son Chriſt Jeſus, by poſitive inſtitution and appointment in his word; no other power can exautorat theſe, that are cloathed with it, but they muſt shew a warrant for it from God in the Scriptures; there being no other way, by which God makes known his will to the ſons of men; if there be, let it be shown, and this will end the debait, and bring us to a quiet and cheirful ſubjection to the preſent laws, about the maters controverted. We meet with confident aſſertions, but no proofs, without which, we cannot look on our ſelves, as looſed from the obligations lying on us, to uſe and exercife the Miniſterial power, by vertue of the inſtitutions and commands of God, given anent it in the word. We know the Miniſtery was inſtitute without a dependance on the Magiſtrat, and exerciſed in the Church, not only without, but againſt his will and command; and God was obeyed, while the Magiſtrat did countermand & oppoſe himſelf thereto, to his outmoſt; which ſayes, that Miniſters and profeſſors did not then dreame of a dependance on, and ſubjection to the Magiſtrat, in the Maters of God: The truth is, to give the Magiſtrat a power to diſſolve powers inſtitute by God, and to ſupercede our obedience to him, in the things he hath commanded, is to make him equal with, if not to exalt him above the Almighty God; the only Abſolute and Univerſal Soveraigne of all Creatures in hea-

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vell and in earth. Is not this to ſubſtitute the Magiſtrat, and to put him in the place of the *Pope*, that *Anti-chriſt*, the man of ſin, who in nothing ſo much, as in this, now under debat, exalted himſelf above all that is called God, or is worshiped, as is prophecied of him, 2 *Theſſ*: 2. 4? The conſequence of this uſurped power, now given to, and aſſumed by the Magiſtrat, in & over the houſe of God, is ſuch, that we tremble to think on that, which will (if things continue in this preſent courſe) be the iſſue of it. As we finde, in the accomplishment, that *Luther* did prophecy, in ſaying that there should ariſe a *Civil pope* in the Church, who should extend his power over the ſame, as far as ever the *Eccleſiaſtical Pope* had done; So we fear, that the troubles, tryals and perſecutions of the Church, shall come near to that hieght, they were at, under the *Pope* of *Rome*. This ſtrange inhanſing of things, divine and humane, ſpeaks ſome thing to fall out, that will make the preſent and ſucceeding generations to tremble; for God will not alwayes be mocked, nor ſuffer his Glory to be taken from Him.

Sixtly, When we conſider the ſinful and evil conſequences, that would of themſelves follow upon our obedience to the Magiſtrat, in the mater now controverted, we dar not, for all that is dear to us in this world, comply with what is required of us; nor deſiſt from ſerving of God in the Goſpel of his Son; for (1.) If the former reaſons, for our non-obedience, do hold and prove concludent, would not our obedience to what is enjoyned us, confirme the unjuſt uſurpations, made on the Church, and wreath the yoke of bondage about her neck, to

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the enflaveing of the consciences of all, and the losse of her just rights and privilegdges, purchased for, and granted to her, by Jesus Christ? As our complyance would have made us accessorie to the Magistrats sin, and brought us under the guilt of all the sin and wickednesse, that hath ensued on the same; so we should not only have been cruel to the Church of God, and the souls of professors therein, but we should have brought the ruine of the Church on our own heads; for not only he that is active in and concurres with the causes of evils, is accessorie to all the bad and evil consequences of them; but also he that labours not in his capacitie and station to hinder them, when it is in his power to do: having therefore nothing left us and within our reach, to withstand these usurpations and corruptions, under which the Church now groans, and by which she is in hazard to be destroyed, but the Gospel of Christ, that we find yet commited to us; we dar not give over preaching and hearing of the same, which the Church in all ages hath found to be the power of God to her preservation, and recovery in evil times. (2.) While we think on the following ages, and the obligations that are on us, for transmitting the Gospel to them, in its purity and power, (as our worthy predecessours did before us) & what are the means and wayes, prescribed to us in the word, for effecting of this great good; and with what successe these have been essayed, in the former generations of the Church, to the benefite of succeeding times; we finde ourself straitly tyed, both against positive complyance with what is required of us, and the omission of that, which God hath commanded,

manded, and put within our power, for reſiſting of theſe evils; which if yeelded to and not withſtood, would bring our children, and theirs after them, into the darkneſs of ignorance, Idolatrie, ſuperſtition and prophanneſs, from which God in a great meaſure delivered us. We dar have no hand in the blood of our children, or thoſe, that are comeing after us; which we know, the neglect of theſe means, that are appointed for propagating the Goſpel, would bring upon us, and make us acceſſorie to. It is not unknown, what advance and progreſſe theſe times have made in the foreſaid evils, ſince *Prelacy* reentered amongſt us; and what furder length they would have gone, if it had not been for the obſtruction, they have met with, from the Goſpel preached, by a perſecuted and deſpiſed hand full, in whom the foolishnes of preaching hath been the wisdom and the power of God, to the ſalvation of this Church. (3.) Although the ſolemne tyes, and obligations of the Covenants, under which theſe nations once came, be decryed, and all endeavours uſed, that are within the reach of theſe Lands, to diſannul, diſgrace, and make them void; yet finding, on the exacteſt ſearch we have made, that they remaine in force on us, and this Church, either to the duties contained in them, or els to the Judgments and plagues denunced in the Word of God againſt Covenant breakers; we cannot to any thing that will bring us under ſo hainous and land-deſtroying ſins, as Covenant breaking and perjurie; which we cannot evite, if either we comply with the corruptions, ejected by theſe Covenants out of this Church; or do not, in our ſtations and capacities, according to

our power actively withstand and oppose the same; and labour not for the preservation and advancement of the doctrine, worship and government of this Church, as it was at our taking on of these obligations; which binde us not only to Negatives, or non-complyances with the ejected corruptions; but to endeavour the preservation of these concerns, in our capacities, according to our power. Albeit this seem light to others, yet it is not so to us; for till the mater of these Covenants be disproved, from the Word of God, and made to appear to be unrighteous, antecedent to the Lawes of men, (which none hath yet done) we must judge our selves bound by them to the observation of all they containe, in this present case of the Church. We may not, so far as our knowledge leads us, have any hand in furdering, and advanceing of the ejected corruptions, whether in doctrine, worship or government; but must of necessitie, set ourselves, in our stations against them; lest we be partakers of other mens sins, and consequently of the plagues, that God hath threatned in his word against them.

We shall consider next, some of these *exceptions*, most commonly used against us, with which we are publickly and privately branded, and stigmatized, for rendering us odious and hateful to all. *Exception* 1. That we refuse to give that obedience to the Magistrat, his lawes, and commands, that under the paine of damnation, is enjoyned to all subjects, in the Word of God? *Answer*. Because this is the constant cry of our oppolers, and given for the ground of these reproaches of disloyalty, rebellion & sedition, so unjustly cast upon us; we therefore most

earnestly

earneſtly beg of all, they'l weigh impartiallythe following *Anſwers*, in the ballances of truth and Juſtice.

Firſt, As we chearfullie grant Magiſtracy to be the Ordinance of God, and by divine inſtitution, to be immediatly derived from him; by vertue of which, all, eſpecially Chriſtians, are bound to ſubject themſelvs to thoſe cloathed therewith, and to obey them in all their lawful and juſt commands; ſo we complean of no little injuſtice done to us, by our adverſaries, who for our non-obedience to the preſent lawes about *prelacy*, do charge us, with being ehemies to Magiſtracy, and diſloyal to them, that are now inveſted there with; contrare to our known doctrine anent this mater, preſented to the world, in our publict Confeſſions of faith, yet extant amongſt us, and our conſtant practiſe conforme thereto. If ſimple non-obedience, in ſome particulars, that greive the conſcience, be a ſufficient ground for this charge, will not the Confeſſors and Martyrs, in all ages of the Church, be held guilty of diſloyaltie and ſedition, who, for not obeying of Magiſtrats, in their ſinful commands, have ſuffered greivous and hard things? None can on this ground condemne us, but they will be found to juſtify the perſecutors of the Saints, and to condemne them; if our reaſons, for non-obedience in our caſe, were taken from the unlawfulneſs of authority, and our Rulers clame thereto, the charge were moſt juſt; but ſeing they are brought from the ſinfulneſs of the mater commanded, while we acknowledge the authoritie, and grant obedience thereto in all other things, how malicious and unjuſt is the charge? Reproaches & lyes will be for another day a weak covering and an unſafe re-

Secondly, We ſuppoſe it will not be denyed to us, that the power of Magiſtrats is not ſimply abſolute, but ſeveral ways bounded and limited; as. (1.) By its own nature, which is properly civil and politck. (2.) By its objects, Truth and Righteouſneſs, to which it is aſtricted, and beyond which, in its exerciſe, it cannot, *jure*, go. (3.) By the abſolute and univerſal authority of God and his laws, from which it and other powers are derived, and to which they are ſubordinat. All theſe limites are ſet to Magiſtracy, which it may not tranſgreſs; and beyond which, obedience is not due to theſe, that are inſtalled in it. By the *firſt* it is diſtinguished ſpecifically from other powers, as immediatly fountained in, and deſcended from God, as it; as the power of Parents, of Husbands, Miniſters of Chriſt, &c. ſome of which did exiſt and had being, before Magiſtracy was in the world. We aſſert that theſe powers, being ſpecifically different from Magiſtracy, and as immediatly derived from God, the Maſtrat cannot, *jure*, diſannul them, hinder their exerciſe, nor diſſolve the obligations on thoſe veſted therewith, to thoſe duties to which they are antecedently bound. It is true, the magiſtrat hath a power about theſe powers; but it is only cumulative, and not privative of the ſame: he is to ſee, that all do their duties in their ſeveral relations & capacities, and that Truth, Righteouſneſs, and Peace be keeped, and flourish amonſt them. By the *ſecond* the magiſtrat is bound up, and tyed to, truth and righteouſneſs, and hath no power to go beyond, far leſſe to do contrare to them; they being the eſſential objects and ends of magiſtracy, for the preſervation and advanc-

vancement of which, it was first institute & brought into the world. By the *third* the magistrat is so subjected to God and subordinated to him, (as all other powers are) that not only the right of precedency, in the mater of authority and obedience thereto, is Gods, and not the magistrats; but the magistrat is that much subjected to his law, as that he hath no *jus*, or power, to command any thing to the contrare: his commands here are nullities, as *a non habente Potestatem*: so that non-obedience in this case is not disobedience to him; but obedience to God; for as God hath not given power to any of his creatures against himself; so in the Collation of the magistratical power and authority, there is an obligation conveyed with it on the persons called thereto, to improve and use the same for him, and the furtherance of obedience from others to his laws; for the magistrats power being of God, makes him the Minister of God, for the good and not the hurt of others. Hence it is evident and beyond dispute, with all sober minded men, that the commands of the magistrat, do not binde any subject, where God commands the contrare. Court parasites and flatterers may extend this power of the magistrat, beyond these, who through the love of their worldly interests and lusts, (when favoured and advanced by Rulers) more then from any true respect to their just authority and prerogatives, keep no bounds in their assertions about the magistrats power; but the true markes, and Land marks are set by God himself, and will not be removed, but to the prejudice and ruine of these that labour to overturne them. If we make it not out, (as hath been hinted above) that, that which is

commanded is ſinful, and contrare to the commands of the muſt high God, let us be uſed with all ſeverity; but noe are is granted to us, all acceſſe denyed, and every door ſhut up.

Exception 2. But our adverſaries not finding ſufficient ground, for the former charge, take them to the actions, done in the times of our late troubles and confuſions, charging all that was then done upon our party and their principles. *Anſ.* We are confident that, when the carriage & actions of the true Presbyterian party, in relation to the Magiſtrat, ſhall be ſearched after, and known; they will be a ſufficient confutation of theſe malicious Calumnies caſt upon us, from this head: we know, for juſtifying of this charge, all the enormous actions of former times are fathered on our party, and their principles; but contrare to all juſtice; for we are ſure, if the actions of the late preceeding times were duely differenced, and diſtinguished into their ſeveral kindes, & drawn up to their true fountaines & heads, that theſe of them, that are not juſtifiable, ſhall be found to reſt on perſons and parties of deſignes, inclinations, and principles different from ours, who for worldly reſpects and deſignes, betook themſelves to, and sheltered under the wings of the Presbyterian party, while in power and ſucceſful (as it uſeth alwayes to be in ſuch caſes:) of theſe there were different yea contrare ſorts, that winding into the favour of leading perſons in thoſe times, did climb up to that height of reputation and power, as to influence their counſels and actions, to the committing of ſeveral enormities, that we dar not, yea will not juſtify: but after-alterations gave ſufficient diſcoveries

of

of them, who *Proteus-lyke*, changing into every forme, ſtroke in with the party, that did for the time predomine: let preceeding actions then be diſtinguished into thoſe, that we judge right and reſolve to ſtand to, as the native effects and product of our deſigns and principles (how much ſoever now miſrepreſented;) and theſe that were influenced and brought forth, by the predominency of perſons and parties of different deſigns and principles, in our counſels; and alſo betwixt thoſe, that were the actions of particular perſons, and not of the party; as likwiſe betwixt thoſe uſual infirmities, that men in this ſinful ſtate are incident to, in the beſt of actions, and thoſe groſſe and wicked aberrations from the paths of Righteouſneſs, that are but ſeldome incident to men of honeſt intentions, and well informed conſciences: we ſay, do us the juſtice, thus to difference former actings, while Presbytery was in the riſe, prevailing and proſperous againſt its adverſaries, and we will quickly wipe off the dirt caſt upon us by perſons, that keep no bounds of charity and juſtice, in their cenſures of the late times: let Hiſtories be conſulted (partial as they are) and it will quickly appear, what were the true gennine deſignes, and actions of our party then, and what not; but thus to charge the whole party & their principles, hand over head, with all the enormities of theſe times, lookes rather like a Spirit of bitter malice, then of meekneſs, ſobriety, and judicious love, that ſpeaks no evil, without clear rational grounds, the great ornament of the Profeſſors of Chriſtianity. Is it not known, and beyond all diſput evident, what the Presbyterians did in oppoſeing the change of

vernment, and all the ſad practiſes committed before and after, in relation to it: ſo as the then prevailing party confided more, in the prelatick and cavilier party, then in the Presbyterian, finding them more truely averſe from, and contrare to their deſignes and ways, then the other? But ſome alledge, that we did raiſe & put them in a capacity to do what they did? O how weak is this argueing? If it hold, the holy and righteous God will not eſcape the cenſures and imputations of thir men; all the wickedneſs and miſchief done in this world will, by this *medium*, come upon him, as the cauſe and author of it; from whom they receive all that power, ſtrength, and capacity, that enables them to do wickedly. Shall thoſe that do good to others in educating, ſupplying, & affording them all neceſſaries, abuſed by them to ſin and ryotous living, be judged the authors of their wickedneſs? O folly! If our intended brevity could ſuffer it, we would make it out from undeniable inſtances, that the government had not ſuch ſure & ſtedfaſt friends, as the Presbyterians, who were truely ſuch, and acted according to their profeſſed principles; who ſtood to it, when others (who are now the only favorits) turned their backs upon it, in going all the length of compliance with the Uſurpers, that was required; while the generality of true Presbyterians refuſed, for which they were diſcountenanced, and looked upon, as a party that was to be ſuppreſt. If perſons that ſpeak thus at randome againſt us, could, by clear *mediums*, knit the practiſes, they charge upon us, to our profeſſed deſigns and principles, how would they triumph; but none of theſe have we yet ſeen and heard. We know, the late

late wars are fathered on our party, as the firſt cauſers and beginners of it? But groundleſly, as will appear to any, that will be at the paines, to ſearch out the true cauſes and grounds of them: we are confident that, as any, who is truely unbyaſſed, comes to the through knowledge of theſe, they will find our adverſaries in the blame, and not our party, who for Religion, liberties, and ſelf preſervation, (for all was at the ſtake) were then forced to armes, throw the inſatiable pride and tyranny of the then Prelats; but too much of this. Only we muſt ſay, if things now hold on in their preſent channel, in which they have run theſe few years paſt, we doubt not, but many will juſtify and allow, what once they condemned.

Exception 3. It is with no little confidence aſſerted by ſome, that although the Miniſterial power be immediatly from Chriſt, by divine inſtitution; yet, the exerciſe thereof is from the Magiſtrat, ſo that Miniſters may not convocat the ſubjects, preach, and diſpenſe ordinances, without liberty from him? *Anſ.* (1.) We deſire to know, whence our adverſaries have learned this diſtinction? Sure not from the word; there is not the leaſt footing for it there; if it be, let it be produced. We know its original from whence it came, that man of ſin, the Pope of *Rome* (from whoſe *Arſenal*, the *All* of the Hierarchy hath been brought, and this among the reſt) who for gaine, and fixing of an univerſal abſolute dependance of all upon him; invented this diſtinction, that was unknown to the Chriſtian world before he aroſe.

But, (2.) We aſſert, that the exerciſe of the

ſterial power, is, as much immediatly from Chriſt, and independant on the Magiſtrat, as the power it ſelf. *Firſt*, becauſe we finde this power was exerciſed in the Church, in the primitive times and afterwards, without any dependance on, and acknowledgment of the Magiſtrat anent the ſame: this none will get refuſed. We deſire then to know, what it is, that now ſuſpends the exerciſe of the Miniſterial power on the Magiſtrat, that was not then? Chriſtianity adds no new power or right to the Magiſtrat, it only qualifies and diſpoſes him, to uſe his power aright; but gives none that he had not before: for if a heathenish Magiſtrat should exerciſe all that power about the Church and her paſtours, that is by Scripture allowed to the Chriſtian Magiſtrat, he should not exceed, nor go beyond the limits of the Magiſtratical power. As we finde ſeveral heathenish magiſtrats, in the Scriptures, doing a great part of the work aſcribed to the Chriſtian magiſtrat; (as *Cyrus*, *Darius*, *Artaxerxes*, &c.) ſo they are commended for it. It is to us ridiculous, to ſay, that the heathenish magiſtrats power is not *intenſive & habitualiter* as great, as the Chriſtian magiſtrats. 2. All moral power does neceſſarly include, and hath flowing from it, an obligation to its exerciſe, if moral and Phyſical impediments hinder not; it not only gives right to ſuch and ſuch acts, and makes them valide; but it binds the perſons cloathed therewith to ſuch acts, ſo that the omiſſion of them in their ſeaſon is their ſin; for the end of the power tyes the perſon, that hath it, to intend and ſeek its accomplishment, in ſuch and ſuch wayes, as is proper to the nature of the power; as might be inſtanced, but in a mater ſo clear we forbear.

Thirdly.

Thirdly, How comes this diſtinction to be given and made uſe of, anent the miniſterial power, and not anent others, about which the Magiſtrat may exerciſe his power alſo? may not Fathers, Husbands, &c. do the duties proper to their relations, without leave from the Magiſtrat? if they may, give us a reaſon why Miniſters may not do the duties, proper and ſpecifick to their function, without the magiſtrat? their power is as immediatly from Chriſt, and is as little dependent on the magiſtrat, yea and leſſe, then theirs; never one hath undertaken this task, but they, who make the magiſtrat the fountaine of all power: which is moſt abſurd; ſeing the magiſtrat did finde other powers exiſting and in being before he was.

Fourthly, As the power of miniſters is from Chriſt by divine inſtitution: ſo they are under an obligation, for its exerciſe, by divine commands, which the magiſtrat hath no power to imped, as hath been ſaid. They that are cloathed with the miniſterial office, are commanded to exerciſe it, who, in no place of Scripture, are directed to the magiſtrat, for his licenſe; If they be, let us ſee it: no doubt we had heard of it, ere this time, if any ſuch thing were.

Exception 4. There is one exeption uſed againſt us, among others, and urged with no little vehemency, in the matter of our loyaltie and obedience to Authoritie; to wit, our non-appearance before the Councel, on ſummonds given out againſt ſome of our number, at ſeveral occaſions; which is held forth to be, and ſtrongly aggravated for a high evidence of our contempt of our Rulers, and the authoritie wherewith they are cloathed: for which up wards of 80. of

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Gentlemen, Ladyes, Miniſters and yeomens are intercommuned; and the ſubjects, under the ſame penaltyes due to ſuch, inhibited all manner of aſſiſtance to, and converſe with them. *Anſ.* Not likeing to dip into, and diſcuſſe the ſeveritie of this ſentence of *intercommuning*, paſſed with ſuch ſolemnity againſt us, nor yet to canvaſſe the legality or illegalitie of it; but leaving it to others, better verſed in, and acquainted with our Lawes; we offer the following conſiderations to all, which we hope will, to the unbyaſſed, not only alleviat but juſtify our non-appearance. (1.) Beſide what the law of nature hath provided and teaches all men, anent ſelf preſervation; we ſuppoſe, it will not be denyed, but granted to us by all, that, if many of the precepts and examples we have in the word of God, do allow flight to Miniſters and Chriſtians from the unjuſt violence and oppreſſion of Rulers, when it is within their power to decline it; then our non-apperance before the Councel wil not neceſſarily inferre a contempt of their authority, or any true diſloyaltie and diſobedience to them: Otherwiſe Chriſt Jeſus our bleſſed head, his Apoſtles and others, will be found as chargeable with this crime, as we; from which all Chriſtians do free them. While we think on theſe precepts and examples of Chriſt, his Apoſtles and Chriſtians, who lived in Scripture times, we cannot avoid theſe two concluſions, which in deſpite of all contradiction do make out the former inference, as 1. That paſſive obedience to the unrighteous decrees and punishments of Rulers, is as undue, as active obedience to their unjuſt commands: injuſtice in ſentences and punishments, binds no more to ſubmiſſion

miſſion to theſe, then unrighteouſnes in commands tyes to obedience, where the infliction of ſuch punishments is evitable; for Rulers are not enabled by their authority to injuſtice more in the one, then they are in the other; and conſequently there can be no obligation on their ſubjects from their authoritie, to give themſelves up to their unjuſt punishments, more then to yeeld obedience to their iniquous commands: & if it were not ſo, Chriſt and his Apoſtles ſinned in not giving this obedience: which is moſt abſurd. *Obj:* 1. But this is contrarie to the doctrine of many Proteſtants, who teach that paſſive obedience is due, and should be given, where active obedience is not? *Anſ:* 1. We know of no Proteſtants that teach ſo, except thoſe who were proſylited into court paraſites; it was neither the doctrine nor practice of moſt Proteſtants, as is clear from their writings and Hiſtory. 2. We deſire to know of them that thinke otherwiſe, what this allowed flight is, If it be not a removing of ourſelves (when the circumſtances of caſes permit) from the decrees and ſentences of Rulers, appointing us to unjuſt punishments? which is nothing, but a denying of paſſive obedience to ſuch ſentences. Who can evite this? Some there are who grant this, in ſentences that reach the life; but not in ſentences that only touch the body and eſtate, as impriſonments, fines, exile, &c. But give not any juſt inſtances, or ſound reaſon for what they aſſert. *Concl.* 2. Hence alſo we gather from the foreſaid precepts and examples, that non-ſubmiſſion to unjuſt ſentences, when within our power, is not inconſiſtent with that reſpect, eſteem, love, honour and obedience, which, by vertue of Gods com-

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mands, we are bound to give to Rulers; and conſequently is no contempt of their authority, nor any true diſloyalty; els Chriſt in allowing himſelf, and his Apoſtles in practiſing this flight, had been contemners of authoritie and diſloyal to it: which all Chriſtians aſſert to be falſe. Hence it is evident, and will be ſo to the unprejudged, that if our Oppoſites faſten not this charge on the mater, they will never be able to do it from our non-appearance ſimply and abſtractedly conſidered. *Obj.* 2. Our Rulers ſummonds being properly their commands to us. for our appearance before them, (which is lawful and in its ſelf juſt) we were bound to have appeared, both on the account of their authority, and the thing commanded? *Anſ.* This being the objection of greateſt ſeeming ſtrength, and moſt uſed to our reproach, we ſhall conſider it a little, and (1.) Waveing the debate about the nature of ſummonds, and leaving their native import, uſe and conſequences to Lawyers; We aſſert, that when the commands of Superiors, (altho lawful in their immediat object or matter) are, in their ſtated deſigne, ſo connected with irreligion, injuſtice, oppreſſion and unrighteouſnes, that they become the engines and means of oppreſſion and violence, or of any thing truely ſinful in its ſelf; we ſay, ſuch commands participat of the nature of their ends, and become unjuſt: as for inſtance, when Rulers in order to oppreſſion and perſecution, command any ſubject to witneſs his knowledge of the Orthodox opinions and practiſes of ſuch and ſuch perſons, the ſubject in this caſe ought not to obey ſuch commands; which our of this caſe and the like, that are abſtract from ſuch ſinful ends, he not only may, but ought

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to obey; or if a master or father should require his servant or son to bring to him such a woman to such a place, they knowing it is for committing of uncleanes with her, they should not obey; which, when without respect to this wicked end, they are bound to do. If this were not a truth, the officers and souldiers, that apprehended Christ and Crucified him, were innocent and blamlesse: which all grant to be false, for it was the injustice of the ends of their lawful Rulers commands in this thing, that made their obedience to them undue and unjust, so that they were truely culpable and guilty of Christs blood, as well as their Rulers. (2.) Supposeing but not granting, the summones to be good & just in themselves; yet it is a Maxime agreed to by all Divines, that where two things morally good, doe tryst in Christians practice, the one of one or two degrees of goodnes, the other of three or foure, that the last should be chosen and preferred to the first: but so it fell out to be in our case. To our thoughts on this matter, it was beyond question, that our non-appearance at these times, to which we were cited, was a greater good (supponing the other to be good, which we do not yeeld) both to the Magistrat, our selves and others, then our appearance could have been; for thereby the Magistrat was withheld from unjust oppression, he should have been guilty of, the Gospel preserved with the people in its purity, much suffering to others prevented &c. while we had no good to expect from our appearance, but a meer act of obedience. (3.) That non-obedience, in some cases and things, to the commands of Rulers, is no true disobedience, as (1.) In things without the Magistrats line and reach, although

altho the things commanded be juſt and good in themſelves: ſuppone the Magiſtrat ſhould command a perſon unordained, to preach the Goſpel, diſpenſe the Sacraments, &c. this being beyond the Magiſtrats line, it were no diſobedience in any ſubject, not to obey ſuch commands. (2.) In things contraire to mercy and juſtice, that one Subject oweth to another, if the Magiſtrat command either the not doing of theſe, or the doing of the contrare; not obeying here, is no diſobedience. The truth is, if the mater commanded be not juſt, and, antecedent to the Magiſtrats commands, not neceſſare; not obeying is no diſobedience; and the reaſon is, becaus no power can juſtly crave obedience, when it acts either beyond, or againſt its true adequat formal object: but of this above. (3.) When Magiſtrats commands are oppoſite to Gods, (which hath often fallen out) obedience to God can be no diſobedience to the Magiſtrat. But in our caſe we undertake to prove, that altho the thing commanded, to wit, appearance, be within the compaſſe of the Magiſtrats power, that it was contrare to mercy and juſtice; yea and things commanded and allowed us of God; which will exeem our non-appearance from diſobedience, & conſequently from contempt of Authority.

Knowing and being morally certaine, that the unjuſt violence, deſigned againſt us, would have inevitably followed on our appearance, we chuſed rather to forbear it, and to uſe the flight Chriſt allowes to his ſervants and people, in the like caſes. It is a Maxime in Morals or practical divinty, accorded to by all Divines, that of two penal evils, when the election of them is in our arbitriment, the leſſer is

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to be preferred to the greater: And to any that conſider the caſe, we then had before us, it will be manifeſt, that flight was much preferable to the ſeverity, we were to expect on appearance; of which we were aſſured, not only from the ſtanding lawes of the Kingdome, but likwiſe from the preceeding carriage of our Rulers; who, altho ſlow and negligent enough in the execution of the lawes againſt *Papiſts*, *Quakers*, and other hetero dox opinious and wicked practiſes; yet punctual and ſtrick, in puting the law to more then its full execution againſt us, to which they have been, and are inſtigated by our enemies, the Prelats, to ſuch a hight of keenneſs, that if the mater contained in our ſummonds cannot be made to appear, we are put to anſwer ſuch interrogatories, and required to give and ſubſcribe ſuch oaths, engadgments and bonds, to which, they know, we cannot without deſtroying of our principles yeeld; for refuſeing of which, many of our party have been caſt into priſons, fined, banished, &c.

Thirdly, It had no little influence on us in determining our non-appearance, that the uſual legal forme of procedour in judgment, allowed to and uſed with others, is not obſerved towards us; from which we could not expect juſtice, but all ſeverity. On our appearance we have no accuſer, often no lybel condeſcending on, or containing our crimes, with the circumſtances; no witneſſes produced; but an oath adminiſtred to the empannelled, for expiſcating of accuſations againſt ourſelves and others, and that in crimes made by law capital; and the oaths of theſe, whom the law calls, *ſocij criminis*, ſuſtained for valid probation; wayes of procedour condemned

by the law of God and nations, except where the Papists cruelty takes place. And if all these fail, the subscribing of engagments and bonds is proposed & required (as is said above;) on the refusal of which, a prison is the best we meet with. Let any man of ordinare reason and justice judge, whether appearance before Rulers, who, by following of such methods and wayes in judgment, declare themselves resolved to have at the persons arraigned, whether *jure* or not; we say, let any judge, whether appearance before such, when it is in their choise to appear or not, be rational and safe; except where the supposed guilty intends by their appearance, to prevent greater severity.

Fourthly, Among other things, that came under consideration with us against this appearance, was the oath *de super inquirendis*, lately framed into a law, and now pressed on us, which (for the reasons formerly given) we dar not take; for besids the severe punishments (as imprisonment, arbitrary fines, exile to forraigne plantations, &c.) we were to look for, for refuseing of this oath; if we take it, we are, contrare to all natural equity, mercy and justice, made the accusers of ourselves and others, contrare to the provision made in the act establishing and imposeing of this oath, which declares that the oath taken by any shall not militat in judgment against the takers of it to such & such penalties therein specified, and yet the mater of their lybel useth to be drawne from it, and if they deny their deposition, an oath is addoced for probation against them: And it is not intelligible by us, how such an oath can be sustained for valide probation against others, and not against

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the deponent; seing a person's own confession of his crimes is judged sufficient against him, much more should this oath, which necessarly suppons and infers confession, even judicial.

But *Fiftly*, In the next place, the evil consequences, that by our appearance, we were certane, would have redounded to many, made us forbear it; for if we had appeared, we were sure perpetual imprisonment, or exile from our native countrey, had ensued thereon; whereby we should have been put out of a capacity, for labouring the preservation and advancement of the Gospel in this Church, of which we are members, and to which we, as Ministers and Christians, are so straitly tyed and bound; the people should have been robbed of a faithfull Ministery, and the benefite of the word purely dispensed by them; the rod of persecution, now on the back of this Church, should have been more sharpened against the remnant of our party; the people exposed to more shakeing and winnowing temptations, to the endangering of their stedfastnes; our adversaries of all sortes more emboldened to vent & spew out their venemous doctrines, and to carry on their designed defection to a greater hight: all which being more then probable, yea to us morally certane, we durst not do that, which would have opened the door to all these evils. These arguments do suppone, and lean on the unjust oppression, intended and prosecuted against us, which is made out both as to mater & designe, in the precedent and subsequent discourse.

Sixtly, It was never a piece of disloyalty and disobedience to Magistracy even for persons confessedly guilty, to keep themselves from the stroke of the law,

to run away from it, and to escape out of prisons, if they could effect it, and consequently not to enter into prisons, when cited thereto, must be as free of disloyalty, especially when the cause, for which any is in hazard thereof, is righteousness, as ours is at this day.

SECT. IV.

Our practice cleared from separation; where it is also proved unlawful, to submit to the Ministry of the Curats.

Exception 5. The ejected Ministers preaching, & dispensing of ordinances, and peoples running to, and hearing of them, in this manner, and withdrawing from communion with the Church, in the allowed publick ordinances, is separation; which is against the principles and practises of the Presbyterians in foregoing times? *Ans.* because this, in acts of Parliament, publict Sermons, and in Pamphlets, is with great confidence asserted; we shall take it a little into consideration; and see whether the Prelats and their Creatures; or our Ministers and the people adhering to them, be the separatists: a sinful separation, we grant, there is, but who are the Causers of it, and guilty thereof, before God, they or we, let our following answers and reason determine, to which, that they may be more clearly apprehended, we premise. 1. That it is not every sort of separation, that is sinful and evil; some kinds of it are duty and commanded, as our Protestant divines make good against the *Papists*, as *Joseph Hall*, and all that writ on that subject: for it is our part, to

to ſeparat from ſin, and Profeſſors joyning together in it, with which the worship of God comes too often to be vitiated, and polluted: for this we have many precepts and commands in the word *Epheſ.* 5: 11. with other Scriptures. 2. To make non-preſence, or abſence from the meetings of Chriſtians for worship and goverment, ſinful ſeparation, there muſt be *firſt* a ſtated habitual abſence, *ſecondly*, Such reaſons and grounds for it, as will not juſtify it; for if the abſence be not ordinare, it is not eſteemed ſeparation; altho the reaſons of it be not juſtifiable *pro hic & nunc*: and albeit the abſence be ordinare and habitual, yet if its cauſes, whether moral or phyſical, be right and warrantable, it is not ſinful ſeparation; for abſence from the meetings of Chriſtians in worship or government, is either ſinful or not, according to the cauſes or reaſons of it. 3. The grounds that will juſtify and warrant a withdrawing, in ordinare, from ſuch meetings, muſt be. (1.) The want of a juſt authority or right, in thoſe that diſpenſe the ordinances of worship and government: The *Phariſees* queſtion propoſed to Chriſt, Matth. 21: 23. did ſuppone a commonly granted, and received truth, which Chriſt does not deny, but tacitly yeelds; that they who act publickly in the Church muſt have a juſt authority & right ſo to do: we ought to have ſome rational convincing evidence of this, & if it be wanting, it will warrant this withdrawing; much more, if its want be poſitively clear. (2.) Corruptions in the worship of God, ſo knit to them in their uſe, that they cannot be uſed without the uſe of theſe corruptions, will alſo allow a withdrawing from ſuch meetings; as all *in theſi* grant. (3.) Sinful cum-

cumſtances, as ſuch places, times, cauſes, perſons &c. That in their connexion with, and reſpects to things, that are truely ſinful and evil, becomes ſo, *probic & nunc*; as faſts, thankſgivings, &c. when obſerved at ſuch times, and for ſuch Cauſes, as are evil. (4.) Unſound and heretical doctrine, taught in ordinare, in ſuch meetings, Matth. 24. We grant it is not every error and erronious doctrine, that will juſtifie a peoples withdrawing, from ordinances, diſpenſed in the aſſemblies of the Church, (there being nothing beſides that may juſtly cauſe it;) but only ſuch as is truely heretical and ſubverſive of the foundations of Religion, Righteouſneſs, & peace. When poiſon is adminiſtred in ſtead of wholeſome food, a people are bound to ſee to their own ſafety, that they be not deſtroyed by that, which was intended for their health. (5) There are ſome things in the ſtated caſe of ſome times, and other circumſtances, that will give ſufficient ground for this withdrawing, that will not do it at other times; as in the beginnings of defection, under the conteſts betwixt the orthodox and unſound party, uſually ſome things fall in, that will call for a ſeceſſion from Church aſſemblies; which have often fallen out in the Church, and is evident from hiſtory; particularly in the time of the *Arminians*, predomining in the Church of *Holland*; and many others that are to be ſeen in the records of the Church. 4. Although in ſome caſes, a negative ſeparation be lawful and right, where a poſitive is not; yet in ſome caſes, a poſitive ſeparation is lawful and duty: it is hard to determine of caſes in this matter, except where the caſe hath been, or els is exiſtent; there are two caſes

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in which this is allowed; intrusion, and an universal infection of the worship and government of the Church, with superstition, idolatry and tyranny, to the polluting of all its ordinances: we hope there will be no controversy anent the second, seing it is the doctrine, and hath been the practice, of the reformed Churches, in their secession and departur from the Church of *Rome*, on that very head; who not only withdrew from the communion of that idolatrous Church; but erected themselvs into distinct Churches, with officers and ordinances, conforme to the commands and institution of Christ: and when the mater is seriously and impartially weighted, there will be found, as little ground of controversy about the first; anent which we take these two to be evident truths. (1.) That Churches are not bound to subject to, but to withdraw from these intruded upon them; partly because the just rights of the Church are wronged and taken from her, which all ought to maintaine, and not to quite, & partly because she is enslaved thereby, and subjected to the lusts & tyranny of men, and a preparative laid downe to others for doing of the like, in times coming. (2.) That this intrusion is either on Churches that have bin and are setled in Christs way, with able and faithful Ministers; or else on these that want & are vacant for the time: If it be on Churches that are under the setled inspection of faithful Ministers, they are bound to adhere to these, and not to give place to the intruders, from whom to withdraw, can be no sinful separation; the intruders, and these that fall off to them, are the separatists: if the Church or Churches be without faithful Ministers, they al-

are obleidged to refuse the intruding Ministers; and if this unjust and violent intrusion on them continue, they are oblidged to provide themselves of Ministers, that under their oversight, they may have and enjoy the benefite of the Gospel and its ordinances, to which by the commands of Christ, and the necessity of the means of eternal life, they are straitly bound; for as unjust intrusion brings nothing with it, to make a people yeeld to the intruders; so it untys no obligation formerly on them, for endeavouring of their setlment with a faithful Ministery. If we thought these, *in thesi*, were questioned by any, we could with great ease make them out to the conviction of all; but taking them for granted, we surcease any further probation. Therefore 5. We desire, it may be also considered, that there is a vast difference betwixt hearing of, and submiting to Ministers, in the exercise of their Ministery, in the general; and doing of these to such and such Ministers: the question betwixt us and our adversaries, is not whether we should hear and submit to Ministers in their Ministery, for this we do not deny; but whether we should hear and submit to these, that were our Ministers & set over us bythe holy Ghost, before this change in the Church; or these sent from and thrust in upon us, by the Magistrat and Prelates? It is no little wrong done us by our enemies, who give it out to the world, that we contemne a Ministery & ordinances, and are against hearing; while our practice, declares the contrare to all, and for which we are dayly suffering. We hold that, as it is our duty to withdraw from, and not to subject to the Prelates, and their Creaturs; so it is likwise our duty, to cleave

cleave to our former Miniſters, in hearing of the Goſpel, and receiveing of ordinances from them, as we can, & have acceſs: we have given reaſons for the affirmative, & ſhall, the Lord willing, do the like for the negative. 6. It would alſo be adverted, that there is a great difference, betwixt a Churches bringing in, and carrying on of a defection willingly, in a Church way; and the Magiſtrats doing this of himſelf, without the Church, yea forcibly, *Eccleſia renitente ac reclamante*; although there ſhould be no difference, as to the mater; yet there is much as to the maner and way, to influence, regulat and diverſifie miniſters and Chriſtians carriage under them: all in the Church are to ſubject to the power, proper and peculiar to her, which they ought not to do to others, uſurping this power, and taking it out of her hands. 7. In this mater a difference or diſtinction is to be made, betwixt the perſonal ſcandals and corruptions in miniſters walk, and adminiſtration of holy things; and theſe that may be, or are found in the way of their entry, which may be ſuch, that although they do not invalidate their miniſterie, in their diſpenſing of the word and its ordinances, to the rendering of theſe nullities; yet may give ſufficient ground to peoples withdrawing from and not ſubjecting to them, as their lawful and ſent paſtours. 8. There is a great difference betwixt a Church regularly conſtitute according to the Word of God, in her miniſterial political being, enjoying the exerciſe of all ordinances in purity, that comes afterwards, while under that conſtitution, to be intruded upon by the ſole power of the Magiſtrat, and perſecuted in officers and membets for adhereing to her

conſtitution, in oppoſition to the intruders, and the corruptions brought in upon her by them, againſt her conſent; and a Church declining from her former purity, in doctrine, worſhip and government, abuſeing her power to the bringing in and furthering of the ſaid defection, and univerſally concurred with, and ſubmited to in the ſame. The firſt is our caſe, & concerns the ſtate of the queſtion betwixt us and our oppoſites, in the charge of ſeparation they lay on us.

The queſtion then betwixt us, and our adverſaries, is not whether we may lawfully ſeparat from publict ordinances, for the corruptions and perſonal miſcarriages of fellow-worſhipers, whether miniſters or others; as one in a little *manuſcript* doeth maliciouſly or ignorantly ſtate it: we are ſtill of the ſame minde with our worthy predeceſſours in their debats againſt the *Browniſts* and *Separatiſts*; as our practice this day doeth confirme, in our aſſemblies and meetings for worſhip, differing in nothing, as to this, from what it was before. Neither is it, whether it be ſimply or in it ſelf ſinful, to hear & receive ordinances from theſe, who have entered by, & ſubmitted to the *prelates*, abſtract from our preſent caſe; for we grant the caſe may be, in which it is lawful yea duty to hear, and receive ordinances from ſuch; yea and hath been. But the true ſtate of the queſtion, is, whether a Church or Churches conſtitute according to the rules of the word, provided and ſettled with miniſters, regularly called and ſubmited to, ſhould yeeld to the Magiſtrats and Prelates, violently ejecting their miniſters, and thruſting in other miniſters upon her, not only without, but againſt her conſent; in ſubjecting to ſuch, hearing

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and receiving of ordinances from them; while the Magistrat does all this, for furthering and perfecting a course of defection, contrare to solemne Covenants and oaths, by which they were oftener then once, ejected and cast out of this Church? To this we *answer* negatively; that the Church should not subject to such in hearing, and receiving of ordinances from them, but ought to disowne, and withdraw from these, thus entered into the Church, and complying with the introduced corruptions.

This conclusion we prove thus. *First*, They who have no just authority, nor right to officiat fixedly in this Church, as the proper pastores of it, ought not to be received, but withdrawne from: But the Prelates and their adherents, the *Curates*, have no just authority nor right to officiat in this Church, as her proper pastours: Therefore they ought not to be received but withdrawne from. It is expected, they will not deny the *first proposition*: all the debate will be about the *second*, which we make out thus. They who have entered into, and do officiat fixedly in this Church, without her authority and consent, have no just authority and right so to do: but the Prelates and their Curats have entered into this Church, and do officiat therein, without her authority and consent: therefore they have not just authority, &c. The *first proposition* is clear, and we suppose will not be gainsaid by our Antagonists; seing the power of mission, of calling and sending of ordinare fixed pastours, is only in the Church, and not in any other, as all Divines do assert. The *Second* is evident from maters of fact: for there was no Church judicatory called or convocated, for bringing of the Prelats into this

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Church; all was done immediatly by the King & acts of Parliament, without the Church (she being by violence disenabled to meet in her officers for fear of opposition from them;) a practice wanting a precedent in this and (for any thing we know) in all other Churches. *Object.* 1. But our Prelats were consecrat by the Prelats of the Church of *England*? *Anſ.* What signifies that to the Church of *Scotland*, and their just right to officiat in her (suppone the office of prelacie were right and institute?) Does any think, the Church of *England* would acknowledge the authority of Prelats consecrat here, and subject to the same, if all were done not only without but againſt her consent; we suppose not. Either the Church of *Scotland*, at that time, had no power of mission, or els she had; if she had none, wanting prelacy, then our Ministers were no Ministers of Christ Jesus, and all ordinances dispensed in her for many years were nullities; which some of our adversaries, we hope, will not say: if she had the power of mission, how came she to be neglected and usurped upon by another Church, to whom she was not subordinat? *Object.* 2. But Presbyters cannot consecrat Bishops, they being an inferior order. *Anſ.* if it could be shown from Scripture, that Bishops are not only an Order and office different from Presbyters; but that they have a different ordination to their office, from that of Presbyters, it would say much, but nothing of this can be made to appear from the Word of God. But. 2. We ask whether consecration be different from ordination? If it be one with the same, why may not Presbyters consecrat? and if they may ordaine (as we undertake to

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make out from Scripture and Antiquitie) what neceſſitie was there for going to *England* for it, ſeing it might have been done by the Presbyters of this Church? If conſecration differ from ordination, ſure it is a humane cuſtome and invention, for which we have nothing in the Scriptures and pure Antiquity, that only ſpeaks of ordination, the only way, in which all Paſtors entered into the paſtoral office. 3. The truth is, as a Church Miniſterial and politick, conſtitute according to the Word of God, with all officers of divine appointment, hath the full power of the keys of the kingdome of God; ſo there is no ſort of officer, neceſſare by divine inſtitution to her edification, but she is enabled, to furnish her ſelf with ſuch, without a neceſſitie of ſeeking to other Churches for them: and if it be ſo, the Preſbyters of this Church, being her repreſentatives, their conſent should have been had. Although we had no juſt exception againſt the office of the Prelates, as it is conſtitute and declared by law (as we have) but their violent intruſion in this Church, it puts a ſufficient bar on our ſubjection to them, ſo that we may not, yea cannot owne them as the lawful paſtors of this Church. *Obj.* 3. The Magiſtrat conſented to and procured their conſecration? *Anſ.* If any will make it appear, that the Magiſtrat is the Church (as *Eraſtus* does inſolently aſſert without all probation) yea a member of it, as ſuch, or hath the power of miſſion, we shall yeeld the cauſe and quietly ſubmit: but when we ſearch into the Scripture, we find the Magiſtrat, as a Profeſſor of Chriſtianity a member of the Church without all Church power (let be to be the fountaine of it) and ſubjected

as such to the care and overſight of Church Officers, in the exerciſe of their miniſterial authority and power. We grant, it is his part to put the Miniſters of the Church (when negligent in furniſhing of her with officers) to their duty anent it; but not to thruſt in officers upon her of himſelf without her conſent. *Obj.* 4. But the Curats have entered by the Church? *Anſ.* 1. This we deny: the contrare is clear from conſtant practice; for the Curats come in upon congregations only by the Bishop and Patron, who are not the Church, nor have any power from her for what they do, in this: all their right and power is founded upon, and derived from the ſupremacy, and acts of Parliament, and not from the Church; in which the Bishop acts as the Kings delegat and ſubſtitute, only impowered thereto by his law: ſo that the Curats having and deriving all their power from the Prelates, cannot have the ſame from the Church; none gives what he hath not. But. 2. The prelates, not being the lawful governing Church, any that enter congregations by them, cannot be ſaid to enter by the Church; no more then if a Miniſter ſhould enter into a congregation of this Church by a Miniſter or Miniſters of the Church of *France*, or *Holland*, without the Miniſters of this Church, can be ſaid to enter by the Church here; for the Miniſters of other Churches are not the governing Church of this Church. The antecedent is to us clear; for as the Prelates have entered without the Church; ſo the lawful Miniſterial ruling Church, although ſcattered and perſecuted, is yet exiſtent and in being, who by the unjuſt and violent intruſion of others, have not loſt their right of ruleing this Church; but in

in point of right and obligation do continue to be her lawful paſtours; for violence, perſecution and intruſion, do not diſſolve the relation betwixt the Church and her Paſtours, either general or particular; there being nothing in our caſe, that can juſtly do it; other wayes, it should be in the power of the Magiſtrat, to undo and deſtroy the political Miniſterial Church, both formally and effectively which is abſurd. We ask at any, who think perſecution and intruſion do in our caſe annul the paſtoral relation betwixt Miniſters and Churches; whether the Magiſtrats violent ejecting of Miniſters, and puting of *Mahumitan* or *Popish Prieſts* in their roomes, will diſcharge Miniſters and Congregations of their obligations to one another? if they think not, then how can theſe untye their obligations, in our caſe? We ask a reaſon. If they judge perſecution and intruſion by the Magiſtrat in this caſe, to have this effect; then it will inevitably follow, that the Magiſtrat can deſtroy divine commands flowing there from, contrare to the practice of divine relations, & obligations to the obedience of the Church, in the primitive times, who, notwithſtanding of the Magiſtrats Edicts, threatnings, & much actual violence, performed the mutual duties of paſtours and flocks.

Arg. 2. All power of the Prelates and their creaturs in the Church is by law fountained in and derived from the Magiſtrat, and in its exerciſe ſubordinated to him; (as is evident from the *act of reſtitution*. *Parl. Carol.* 2. 1. *Seſ.* 2. *Act.* 1.) which derivation and ſubordination they owne and homologat, by their compliance with what the law does require, in order to it: therefore ſuch we cannot, we may not owne,

owne, receive and ſubject to, as our miniſters under ſeing they acknowledge & ſubject themſelves in their miniſtery to another head, then Chriſt Jeſus, which by law is ſet in and over this Church. That the force of this Argument may be more perſpicuous and clear, we ſhall put it into forme thus: Thoſe that receive and derive their Church power from, and are ſubordinat in its exerciſe to another head, then Chriſt Jeſus, ſhould not be received and ſubjected to, as the miniſters of Chriſt in his Church: But the Prelats and their Curats do receive, and derive their Church power from, and are ſubordinat, in its exerciſe, to another head then Chriſt Jeſus: therefore they ought not to be received and ſubjected to, as the miniſters of Chriſt in his Church. We ſuppoſe the *firſt propoſition* will not be denyed; all the debate will be in the *Second*, Which we prove thus; Theſe officers in the Church profeſſing themſelves ſuch, that derive their Church power from, and are ſubordinat, in its exerciſe, to a power truely Architectonick and ſupream in the Church, beſide Chriſt, doe derive their power from and are ſubornat in its exerciſe to another head, then Chriſt Jeſus: But ſo it is, that the Prelates and their creaturs, do derive their Church power from, and are ſubordinat in its exerciſe to a power truely Architectonick and ſupream in the Church, beſide Chriſt; therefore the Prelates and their Curates do derive their power from, and are ſubordinat in its exerciſe to another head, then Chriſt. The *major propoſition* is evident: for whoever hath a ſupream Architectonick power, in and over the Church, muſt be an head to the ſame, and the fountaine of all Church power: it is a repug-

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nancy to be ſupream, & have an Architectonick power, and not to be the head of that Society, to which any is ſuch. Now to the *Minor*, that the Prelats and their Curats have their power from, and in its exerciſe are ſubjected to a ſupream Architectonick power, is beyond diſput clear, from the *act of reſtitution*, formerly mentioned, and other acts to be mentioned afterwards; and will be ſo to any that conſiderately peruſe the ſame; of which we are to ſpeak at more large, under the laſt head; but for the time, we propoſe theſe three from theſe acts, for making out of this argument. 1. They are expreſly made to have a dependance upon and ſubordination to the King, as ſupream to them, in their Church judicatories and adminiſtrations. 2. The government of the Church, in its ordering and diſpoſeing, is annexed to the crowne, as one royal prerogative thereof, which not only ſuppons the government to be in him, as the fountaine thereof, but to be exerciſed with that dominion, that is ſuteable to his regality. 3. The giving of Church power to Church officers, is ſuppoſed to be the effect and deed of his lawes, and acts, without which, all power in the Church is declared to be null and void. *Objec.* Although the Kings Majeſty be ſupream governour in all cauſes, and over all perſons Eccleſiaſtical; yet he is not head to and of the Church? *Anſ.* If he be ſupream governour in ſuch cauſes and over ſuch perſons, *in Linea directa*, no queſtion, he is the head political to the Church; for *GOVERNOUR* & *HEAD* are equipollent terms: whoſoever is ſupream Governour to any ſociety, in this ſenſe, is a proper political head to it; it is needleſs to quarrel about words, if the thing be granted. And

that this subordination or supremacy is direct, or *in Linea directa*, is, we judge, clear from the fore mentioned acts, seing they not only make the King the fountaine of Church power; but moreover in the *act anent the the National Synod*, he is made the *All* of the same, and without him, it is nothing. The like of these, the sun never shined on, except these made by King *Henry* the 8. of *England*; which being scrupuled at by all sorts of persons, at home & abroad, they were, in Queen *Elizabeths* time, forced to alleviat the mater by removeing the title *head*, and some mitigating explications allowed, and ordered to be given to the subjects, at the taking of the oath of supremacy; but no such explications allowed here.

Arg. 3. If the Ministers and Churches required by law to receive and submit to the Prelats, and their Curats thus thrust in upon them, were constitut and setled in Christs way, as Pastors and flocks, in the just possession and actual use of all ordinances, conforme to the rules of the word; then it is no sinful separation, for Churches, in adhering to their Ministers, not to receive nor submit to the Prelates and their Curats: But so it is, that the Ministers and Churches required by law to receive and submit to the Prelats and their Curats, thus thrust in upon them, were constitut and setled, in Christs way, as Pastors and flocks, in the just possession and actual exercise of all ordinances, conforme to the rules of the word: Therefore it is no sinful separation on their part, not to receive and submit to the Prelats and their Curats, in hearing and receiving of ordinances from them. We suppose, the *consequence* of the *major proposition* is evident, and will not readily be denyed

denyed by any; and if it shall happen to be, we prove it thus. If there be divine obligations on Miniſters and their Churches to the performance of the mutual duties of Paſtors and flocks; then it can be no ſinful ſeparation for Churches, in adhering to their Miniſters, not to receive nor ſubmit to the Prelats and their Curats; But ſo it is, that the Miniſters and Churches, required by law to receive and ſubmit to the Prelats and their Curats, were under divine obligations to the performance of the mutual duties of Paſtors and flocks: Therefore it is no ſinful ſeparation for Churches not to receive nor ſubmit to the Prelats and their Curats. The *conſequence* of the *major propoſition* leaneth upon theſe two, and is infallibly made out by them, *firſt* that there is a divine relation of Paſtor and flock, betwixt Miniſters and the Churches, over whom they are ſet; and *ſecondly* that they are bound by divine commands, to do the mutual duties of ſuch, contained and preſcribed in the word of God: none that acknowledge the Miniſtery to be an ordinance of divine inſtution, and the Scriptures to be the rule of religion and righteouſneſs, will be able to refuſe theſe. We conceive none, even of our Antagoniſts, will deny the *Minor*; if they do, will it not follow that the Church of *Scotland*, before and at the Prelats introduction, was no Miniſterial political Church? which is falſe; as we undertake to prove; when ever our oppoſites give their reaſons to the contrare. But we know the greateſt debate will be about the *Minor propoſition* of the firſt argument, to wit, that Miniſters and Churches, required by law to receive and ſubmit to the Prelats and their Curates, were ſetled in Chriſts

as Paſtors and flocks, in the juſt poſſeſſion, & actual exerciſe of all ordinances of divine appointment: This for mater of fact is beyond all denial, for the Churches of Chriſt in *Scotland*, before and at the Prelates late entry among us, in the Year 1662. were, for the generality of them, furniſhed with Paſtors, and in the poſſeſſion of all ordinances; The debate then will run upon the *jus* of that conſtitution, that was exiſtent and in being at the Prelats introduction: againſt which there is nothing, that can with any colour of reaſon be objected, but one of theſe three: *Obj.* 1. Prelacy was wanting in that conſtitution, which it ſhould have had? *Anſ.* 1. To the validity of this objection, it muſt firſt be made out, that Prelacy, as it is eſtabliſhed by law, and in uſe and exerciſe, among us, at this day, is of divine right, or an office inſtitute in the word of God; which is not yet done, and for any thing we have yet ſeen, never will; Let our adverſaries in this great debait conſider the reaſons and exceptions we have given in againſt it, and anſwer them: yea, we undertake to prove that it is not only without, but againſt the word of God. 2. We ask at the Patrons of Prelacy, whether they judge it eſſential to the conſtitution of the Miniſterial political Church? If they judge it eſſential, doth it not neceſſarily follow, that all the Reformed Churches of *France*, *Holland*, &c. are no miniſterial Political Churches; and that all ordinances diſpenſed in them are Nullities; yea that the Churches of the *vallyes* of *Piemont*, called the *Albigenſes*, (which by all hiſtorians have their original deduced from the Apoſtles,) were not ſuch, ſeing by the confeſſion of all, they never had Prelacy from

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their begining of Christianity to this day, which is contrare to the sense and judgment of our Worthy Reformers, who alwayes esteemed them pure Churches. The truth is, the consequence is so necessare, that the most of the Prelatical party of the Church of *England*, admit no Minister of the reformed Churches to officiat among them without reordination; by which they fix a desperat Schisme between them and these Churches, while they desire and endeavour reconciliation with *Rome*: which speaks out the tendency of their principles? If they think Prelacy not essential to the Political Ministerial Church? (as some of them do grant?) then our Church constitution, as to all essentials, was right, our Pastores bound to feed, and people to submit, hear and receive ordinances from them; *Obj.* Although Prelacy be not essential to the *esse*; yet it is usful and necessare to the well being of the Ministerial Church? *Ans.* 1. As hath been said above, we know of no good, to which Prelacy is said to be necessare, that is not easily attainable without it; yea and is not win at in the reformed Churches. 2. Then the former obligation on our Pastores and this Church must continue; for if Prelacy be not essential nor necessare to the being of the Ministerial Churches, the obligation, which flowes from, and is dependant on it, cannot be discontinued by the introduction of Prelacy upon us; it should rather confirme and strengthen this obligation, in the opinion of such, then dissolve it. It is, no question, the foresight of this and other consequences of the like nature, that forces the most of the now Prelats, to maintaine the absolute and essential necessity of Prelacy in the Church, against the evidence of Scrip-

and Antiquity. *Obj.* 2. But what was done in the Year 1662. for the introduction of Prelacy in this Church, was but a repossessing her of it, that had been ejected *An.* 1638? *Ans.* 1. The ejection of Prelacy *Anno* 1638. was but the purgeing of Presbytery from Prelacy, that had been brought in upon it, after Prelacy had been cast off by this Church in her first Reformation of Religion from Popery: It is evident from Histories, the books of discipline first and second acts of Parlt. Particularly that of the Year 1592. the National Covenant, and the records of the general Assemblies, that with the Reformation of Religion in doctrine and worship, Prelacy was also removed and cast out of this Church, as an high corruption in her government. So that from the Reformation of Religion from Popery, Presbytery had the first possession. It is true, the Bishops that then were, did continue in their bishopricks, and keeped their places in *Parlt.* but without all Church power or jurisdiction, that they had formerly exercised in the times of Popery predomining in this Church; And when their Bishopricks came to vaik thorow death, their places were not filled with others, as formerly had been done, till *Mortons* Regency, who for the legal right of their revenues (which he laboured to enhance for his owne use, and could not legally come at, without some shadow of them) endeavoured to bring them in (of which he repented at his death, as is to be seen in the history of the *Duglasses*) which occasioned a hot conteſt betwixt him & the Church, at that time, in her assemblies, who stoutly oppoſed Prelacie, and never gave it over, till by law and practice it was wholly cast out of this Church, *Anno* 1592.

1592. But King *James* afterwards falling too much in love with wordly designs and interests, for facilitating the much courted and desired succession to the crowne of *England* (to which Prelacy was then judged necessare) laboured by sinister and subtile wayes, the introduction of Prelacy upon the Church, (which then was most averse therefrom) that he gave not over his designe in this, till he had setled it by law *Anno* 1612. and brought it in upon Presbytery: but Prelacy not being content with this establishment and exaltation, it attained to in the foresaid Year, never ceased working by its impositions, till it came to that hight of usurpation on Church & State, that procured its ruine *Anno* 1638. All this is so clear from the preceeding records, particularly *Spotswoods* history, that he must be either an utter stranger to these, or els impudently malicious, that denyeth it. Do men think, we are such ignorants of and strangers to these things, that we are not able to discover the vanities and lies of some of that party, who have put pen to paper, and contradicted all this; as the Author of the *seasonable case*, and others, who contrare to all evidence, will maintaine the possession of Prelacy in this Church since the reformation? 2. Supponeing Prelacies possession in this Church since the reformation (which is notourly *false*) till its last ejection *Anno* 1638. as it was in *England*; yet till its divine right be proven, it can claime no *jus* or right in the Church of God, whose concerns cannot be antiquated and proscribed by length of time; Otherwise most of the popish heresies, idolatries and superstitions, should have nigh as good clame, for their being in this Church, as Prelacy; and it is like

if ever Popery aime at its reſtauration, and come any length towards it, in this Church, it will build it ſelf on this foundation, amoog others; as Prelacy does this day, in the laws eſtabliſhing it. *Obj.* But the Magiſtrat bringing in Prelacy, and commanding all to receive and ſubmit to it, (Prelacy being, as ſome ſay, a thing indifferent) all ſhould obey? *Anſ.* leaving the debat about the Magiſtrats power to the laſt head of our diſcourſe, where it ſhall be conſidered alittle; we ſay 1. Whatever power the Magiſtrat hath about the Church, and her concerns as ſuch, it is aſtricted and ſubordinated; to the Word of God, which the greateſt Patrons of *Eraſtianiſme* do yeeld, as *Vedelius*; yea *Eraſtus* himſelf, and all of that Sect: hence the Magiſtrat may not command any thing in the Church, that is contrare to, or without it; and if he do, none are bound to obey ſuch commands, as all Proteſtants grant: therefore till it be made to appear, that Prelacy is allowed and appointed in the word, our non-obedience or non-ſubmiſſion to it, altho commanded by the Magiſtrat, cannot be juſtly condemned. It is true, *Stillingfleet* is at much paines to prove it to be indifferent, but on ſuch grounds as ſhake the foundation of our faith, the perfection of the holy Scriptures; and with ſo little ſucceſſe, as we remaine the more confirmed in the contrare: wo were to us, if we had no better grounds for Presbytery, then the ſtrongeſt pleaders for Prelacy have yet ſhewed for it. 2. The Magiſtrat with the ſubject being under the divine obligations of Covenants and oaths againſt Prelacy, have no power to command its reception, neither can the ſubject give the obedience required, without

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horrid ſin againſt God: If in ſuch a caſe, a power in the Magiſtrat to do, and command contrare to ſuch divine obligations and engagements, and an obligation on the ſubject to obey theſe, be aſſerted, is there not a door opened to the introduction of any Religion what ſoever? And a power granted to and eſtablished in the Magiſtrat, to make void all obligation of obedience to God? Which, to us, is terrible to think on. Are not our Antagoniſts then forced, either to aſſert this power on the Magiſtrat; Or els to prove the mater of theſe Covenants to be ſinful and unjuſt, and conſequently not obligatory on this Church? One of theſe two they muſt do, before they can expect our obedience to the preſent lawes anent it. We grant, ſome of that party have undertaken this task, as to the laſt; but with ſo ſmall fruit, that on a ſerious and impartial peruſal of their Argueings about it, we continue more confirmed in the contrare, then before the ſaid peruſal: whether this proceeds from our dulneſs and incapacity to reach their arguments, or the weakneſs of the ſame, we leave it to the unbyaſſed to judge. 3. We aſſert, that whatever the Magiſtrat may do, either in cauſing or diſſolveing of Church relations and engagments; yet he cannot do this, immediatly and of himſelf, but by the Church; and the reaſon is; as the fixing and eſtabliſhing of Churches relations and engagments betwixt Miniſters and Churches, does ariſe and flow from Chriſts inſtitutions and precepts in his word; ſo the application of theſe to individuals in the Church, either in cauſing or diſſolveing them, is in the Church, and not in the Magiſtrat: he may command the Church to act her part in this, but cannot

do it himself, for the power of calling and mission belongs to the Church, not to the Magistrat; as all Divines ancient and moderne assert, and as, we suppose, is sufficiently proven afterwards.

Arg. 4. The way of the Corats entering into Congregations puts a bar on our subjection to them, that we dar not owne them, for the lawful pastors of this Church: for as their entry is without the Church, and the way that Christ hath setled in his hous for that end, so they have come in on congregations, in wayes, which we judge corrupt, and without all warrant from the Word of God, & the practice of the primitive times: In the search of Scripture, and pure Antiquity, we find, that ordination by Ministers, the election and call of the people, was the way, by which Ministers entered into congregations, and not the institution and collation of the Bishop, nor the presentation of Patrons; which, as they have their pedegry and origination from Popery; (a part of the tyranny of that Hierachy) so they are but late human inventions, derogating from, & vitiating the institutions of Christ about thismater, and that several wayes; as. 1. This way of their entry, by the Bishops institution and collation, does suppone, that their ordination does not sufficiently impower them, to the exercise of the Ministery, without a further licence; which is contrare to the end of ordinatioo, & the nature of the Ministerial power; that, by vertue of its ends and the commands of Christ, does bind the persons invested therewith, to its exercise, without which, he cannot prove faithful to his Master, nor attain the ends of his Ministry, the conversion and edification of sinners. It is true, the Bishops dominion,

dominion, in ſubjecting of his Creaturs to him, is ſtrengthened thereby; but it everts the very end and nature of ordination, that, by this device, is only made to give *potentiam remotam*, not *proximam*. 2. The Patrons preſentation, as it takes away the peoples right of election and conſent, granted them by Chriſt Jeſus; ſo it ſuppons ordination to give no right to the maintainance; or, at leaſt, ſuſpends it; (the effect of preſentations being, in the grant of all, to give a right to the ſtipend;) which we aſſert, according to the word, to be the effect of ones being the Paſtour of ſuch a people, who, by divine commands are bound to maintaine him in all outward neceſſaries for his incouragment in the work, and enabling him to do thoſe duties, both common and ſpecial, which he cannot do without it; To ſay, one is the Paſtour of ſuch a congregation; and yet hath not juſt right to the provided maintinance, is againſt the commands of Chriſt, and the practice of the Church in many ages. But, as this is amongſt the many other pieces of ſlavery, unto which men, throw ambition and luſt, have ſubjected the Church of Chriſt; ſo the Curats, entering this way, we cannot receive, nor give up ourſelves to them, as our guids and Paſtours under Chriſt.

Arg. 5. Many Congregations, into which the Curats are entered, are under a ſtanding obligation to their former Paſtours; not only on the account of the paſtoral relation betwixt them, but for the engagments they came under to ſuch, in their call and reception of them; which is not diſſolved by any thing we have yet ſeen: ſure we are, the Magiſtrat can not do it: *Obj. Solomon*, for the Crime of

ſon, Committed by *Abiathar* againſt the ſtate, banished him from *Jeruſalem*, (where the Tabernacle was) and Confined him to *Anathoth*, his owne inheritance, by which he habitually diſinabled him, from exerciſing the prieſts office: Therefore Magiſtrats may depoſe and exautorat the Miniſters of the Goſpel. *Anſ.* How wide and inconcludent is this conſequence? it is only ſaid in the text 1. *Kings* 2 26, 27. that heremoved him to *Anathoth*, which is but a Civil ſentence. *Obj.* 2. It is ſaid vers 27. that *Solomon* thruſt him out from being prieſt unto the Lord. *Anſ.* *Solomon* did this *conſecutive*, and not *formaliter*; it was a neceſſare conſequent of his deſerved ſentence of banishment, to which he was bound, on the juſtice of the ſentence, to yeeld and ſubmit: a conſequent that will neceſſarlie follow on the deeds of others, to whom our adverſaries will not grant the formal power of exautorating of Miniſters; ſuppone a man by ſmiting, or a phyſician by adminiſtring unwholſome phyſick, do habitually diſinable a Miniſter to the exerciſe of his miniſtrie; will it therefore follow, that he doeth depoſe him from his miniſtrie, or hath the formal power of ſo doing? No wayes. And ſeing the Scripture is plaine in shewing the accomplishment of the Lords word, ſpoken againſt the houſe of *Elie* by *Samuel*, in removing of *Abiather*, and in him, *Elie's* houſe, from the High-prieſt-hood; and alſo the way how it was done; not by a formal ſentence of deprivation deveſting *Abiather* of his office, but by a civil ſentence of confinement to *Anathoth*, that neceſſarly removed him from the Tabernacle, and diſinabled him to do his office there; why do men contend? But ambitio

bition to gaine its deſigne will keep at any hold, how weak ſoever. *Obj.* 3. As this deed of *Solomons* did diſcharge *Abiather* of his former tyes and obligations, to the exerciſe of this office in the Tabernacle, and opened a door for bringing in another prieſt in his roome; ſo we think the Magiſtrats ſentence now does the ſame, to the ejected miniſters, ſeing they are bound to ſubmit to civil ſentences, and the Church may not want Paſtours. *Anſ.* Although we yeeld the *Antecedent*, yet we deny the *conſequent*: for 1. becauſe the parallel betwixt *Abiathers* caſe, and ours runeth wyde: becauſe (1.) *Abiathers* ſentence was juſt, his crime deſerved it, and much more: but ours is not ſo; as the preceeding and ſubſequent reaſons make out. 2. *Abiathers* ſentence was perſonal, and terminated on himſelf only, and did not reach the reſt of the preiſts: ours is againſt all that do not conforme. 3. His was founded on a civil crime againſt the State, and perſon of the King, to wit, treaſon. Our alledged crime is Eccleſiaſtick, for not complying with a courſe of defection from the truth and wayes of Chriſt, to which we and all ſtand engaged by ſolemne Covenants and oaths, which tye us, in our ſeveral capacities and ſtations, to withſtand the contrare corruptions, now brought in upon us. (4.) *Abiathers* punishment, to which he was formally ſentenced, was purely civil, confinement to ſuch a place: Ours, altho it be partly civil, yet is moſtly Eccleſiaſtick; (which is not within the power of the Magiſtrat) we are not only robed of our livelyhoods and contined; but inhibited the exerciſe of our Miniſtrie, and ſtated by ſentence, in a habitual ceſſation from the exerciſe of it, which is truely de-

vation. (5.) *Abiathers* ſentence and punishment was not inflicted, in a time of defection, and for withſtanding of it: ours is paſſed in ſuch a time, and for reſiſting of the ſame, and out of deſigne, on our Rulers part, to carry on their intended defection. 2. The iniquous commands, ſentences and punishments of men (where invincible force is not) does not untye our obligations to God and men; that we by the authority of God are under, for ſerving of him and others in our day.

Arg. 6. If congregations have a juſt right and power of electing and calling of their Miniſters; then thoſe that come in upon them without this, are not to be eſteemed their Paſtours, nor to be ſubjected to as ſuch by congregations, but to be withdrawn from: But here it is ſo; the Curates have entered on congregations, without this election and call of the people, their juſt right and priviledge. All the debat will be about the *Antecedent* of the *firſt propoſition*, which to us is clear from Scripture and pureſt Antiquity, as our orthodox Divines prove againſt the Papiſts. All that *Bellarmin* hath to ſay to this, is the power of the Church to alter and change theſe and other things of the like nature; the very anſwer of our adverſaries: but how or from what this is made good, is not yet showne us: Antiquity is ſo clear and full in this, that it is a wonder, that they, who plead ſo much for prelacy from it, can be able to caſt it here: if the Prelacy, controverted among us, had but half of the evidence from Antiquitie, that the peoples right and power of election hath; it had gon far to have determined the queſtion in its behalf, with ſome that yet ſtand aloofe from it: this ſhews, it is

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not the evidence or inevidence of arguments, that reſolves many, anent the debats of theſe times; but intereſt and luſt that ſweys them more, then the love of truth. But more of this afterwards.

Arg. 7. Hearing of, ſubmiting to, & receiving of ordinances from the Curates alone, and not from others, is enjoyned by law, and required as the ſigne of our compliance with, and ſubjecting to the preſent lawes, bringing in and eſtabliſhing of Prelacy, with other corruptions, which we dare not owne. Hearing, and receiving ordinances from ſuch, hath a twofold bar put upon it to us; an unqualified inſtrument or object; and the reſpect that by the law it is made to have to the corruptions obtruded upon this Church, as the ſigne of our compliance with and ſubjection to theſe. The command of God about hearing, does conſtitut the object and inſtrument (what and whom) we ſhould hear: As we are not to hear all doctrines, but theſe that are ſound; ſo we are not to hear and receive all, that pretend to come in Chriſts name, but theſe, of whoſe miſſion we have ſome rational evidence; at leaſt againſt which, we have no juſt exceptions. This, as to the Curats, is made out by the former arguments. But beſides this, the ſigne appointed and determined by the law, and required of all in this Church, is that they not only withdraw from, and do not hear the ejected and non-conforme Miniſters; but that they hear and ſubmit to Miniſters, that comply with and enter into this Church, by the Prelates: which to us makes hearing and receiving of ordinances from them, a practical approbation of, and compliance with Prelacy, and other corruptions, contained in

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the law: for such is the connection between the signe and the thing signified, that he that yeelds to give the signe, doth in all rational construction approve the thing signified. *Obj.* But hearing and receiving is a duty commanded by God, which being so, cannot cease to be such by the Magistrats command enjoyning it? *Ans.* In this answer our Opponents do ordinarly triumph; but to unfold its vanity and insufficiency in this mater, let it be considered. 1. That Gods law in constituting of duty does not only determine the act, but the objects and instruments, about and by which, they are to be exercised, & without which they are not duty, nor acts of obedience to God, so that is not the act simply, that is made a duty, but in its respect to such and such objects and instruments: as for instance, praying is a duty, not simply in it self considered; but in its respect to God in his son Christ Jesus, for such and such things, he commands and allows in his word; so it is in hearing, whose object and instrument must be such as is appointed in the word, other ways it is not duty, but in many cases, a positive sin; for the commands of God about hearing, do restrict it, in its objects and instruments, without which, it is not duty; so that we must carefully see, what it is we hear, and whom. Let our adversaries first answer our former arguments, and prove that they are those, whom by the commands of God we are appointed to hear; and we shall yeeld. 2. The thing commanded by the Magistrat, in this case and mater, is not a duty; let them prove it that assert this. We grant, hearing of the Gospel, and receiving of the ordinances, is duty; but only as it suppons and takes in lawfully

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called and ſent Miniſtery (known to be ſuch,) to whom the diſpenſation of the word is commited: none will ſay, it is a duty to hear the word and receive ordinances from thoſe, that are not ſent, or have no juſt authority to diſpenſe the ſame: the Magiſtrats commands in his preſent laws, reſtricts hearing of the word, & receiving of ordinances to ſuch & ſuch, inhibiting theſe as to others; which commands not having the due inſtruments appointed by God in the performance of this duty, do not enjoyn a duty but a ſin. *Obj.* 2. If the Prelats & their Curats be Miniſters of the Goſpel; then they are to be heard, & ordinances ſhould be received from them; for the Miniſterial power gives to the perſons inveſted therewith, not only a right to preach the word & diſpenſe ordinances, & maketh their acts valide; but it binds them to the doing of theſe; and all others to ſubmit to them in the exerciſe of their power: as is apparent in all relations, & the mutual duties, that the perſons under them owe to one another; ſo that if Miniſters be bound to preach the Goſpel, and diſpenſe its ordinances, the people muſt likewiſe be oblidged to hear and receive ordinances from them? *Anſ.* Albeit we ſhould yeeld the Prelats and Curats to be Miniſters; to the denying of which, they have given and do give to many, too much ground, by their open avowed perjury, enmity at and oppoſition to true godlineſs; their renuncing of Jeſus Chriſt for their immediat Supream head, by ſubjecting themſelves to another foraigne Supream in the Church; and their wicked and flagitious lives) yet the conſequence will not hold: for. 1. The true ſtate of the queſtion is, whether we ſhould receive & ſubmit to them, as the lawfully called & appropriat Paſtors

ſtors of this Church; which for the former and ſubſequent reaſons we deny: And we would gladly ſee how they will prove it, for although intruders upon the Church be Miniſters, yet their intruſion puts a ſufficient bar on peoples reception of and ſubmiſſion to them; as we have made out both *in theſi* & *in hypotheſi*: wherefore in ſo far, as hearing & receiving of ordinances from Prelatical Miniſters, in our caſe, is an acknowledgment of this, we refuſe it. 2. Peoples obligation to ſubmiſſion to Miniſters, does not immediatly flow from the being of the Miniſterial power and authority, in thoſe cloathed therewith; there are, beſides this, other things that muſt concur to the cauſing of this obligation, which, if they be wanting, will make it void, or at leaſt ſuſpend it; as the rational evidence of its being in perſons pretending to the Miniſtery, the removal of juſt impediments, the Churches call, &c. ſo that there are ſome things either phyſical or moral, that, if they fall out, will ſuſpend this obligation *in actu ſecundo*, while it remaines *in actu primo*; as inability of body, juſt ſuſpenſion for a time, fundamental hereſies, intruſion, &c. now many of theſe being exiſtent on the part of the Prelats and their Curats, in our preſent caſe, we finde ourſelves under no divine obligation to hear and receive ordinances from them. We ſhall not here urge the judgment and practice of our worthy reformers anent the Romish Prieſts, Jeſuits, and others in orders, among them, who ſuſtained, the validity of ordinances diſpenſed by ſuch; and yet held, that they ſhould not be heard, nor ordinances received from them. The inſtance of the phariſies and the ſcribes, *Matth.* 23. will not be found to militat

litat againſt this, till it be made out, that they were intruders, which yet none hath done.

Arg. 8. It is of no little weight to us, when added to the former, that the generality of theſe violently thruſt-in on congregations, are either inſufficient or ſcandalous; (creatures we confeſs fitted for carrying on of the Prelats deſignes, againſt this Church and us) by whom the poor people were, and yet are in hazard, throw Ignorance, Prophannes, Atheiſme, and a Spirit of deluſion, abounding in all corners of this Land: who, inſtead of preventing and cureing of the ſame, do rather further and advance theſe Church-deſtroying evils; as we do not make perſonal ſcandal, of it ſelf, a ſufficient ground of withdrawing from ordinances, diſpenſed by a Miniſter, guilty thereof; yet when theſe are found in the carriage of thoſe, whoſe entry is corrupt, and ſuch as cannot be juſtifyed, we cannot but think ourſelves under ſtraiter tyes to be ware of, and fly from ſuch: partly becauſe of the little or no ground we have to expect any ſpiritual advantage from their adminiſtration of holy things: and partly for the precepts we find in the word for avoiding and ſhuning of ſuch *Philip.* 3. with many others. Shall we give up ourſelvs to the guidance and conduct of ſuch, in the wayes of life, having nothing to engadge us thereto, but the meer pleaſure and will of men, who, we know, are carrying on corrupt deſignes, tending to the overthrow of Religion in its purity & power? What a folly and madneſs were this? It is ſaid, that our charge, in this, is falſe and unjuſt. But we appeal to the experience and obſervation of the generality of Profeſſours in this Church, good and bad,

who have been & are witneſſes to their deportments.

Arg. 9. Beſides theſe there were ſeveral things, in the ſtated caſe of the time, and the circumſtances of it, that withheld, and yet withhold us, from ſubjecting to the prelates and their curates; which we wish were laid to heart by all as they are concerned. Ans. For making way to the introduction of prelacy, the very foundations of civil government were shaken and unhinged, by the diſannullig and reſcinding of ſuch a ſeries of Parliaments, for many years, in the moſt of which, there were, according to ancient cuſtomes and lawes, all that, amongſt us, is held and reputed eſſential to the Conſtitution of Parliaments. By this deed not only the Conſtitution of former Parliaments are ſtruck at; but (as is to be ſeen in the reaſons given for it, in the *act reſciſſorie*) a preparative is made, for the changing of the Government, by any that, in after ages, have a minde for, and power to effect it. Although the Parliament of *England*, at that time, was as highly prelatical, and as much made for the Kings deſignes, as ours; yet they forbore ſuch a deed, anent the Long-lived-Parliament, albeit they had the ſame reaſons and grounds for it, that we pretended. 2. This change made in the Church, was accompanied, and yet is, with ſuch a ſpeat of enimity at, and oppoſition to true godlines, in its neceſſare exerciſes; that the perſons that favoured any thing of Religion, ſobriety and conſcience, came under a cloud, and were diſcountenanced, even from the higheſt to the loweſt, as perſons not fit to be intruſted in any place of office or power: while theſe that were known to be of diſſolute lives, and given to all ſorts of wickednes,

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were much made of, countenanced and intrusted, as the only confidents of the time; from whence it came to pass, that wickedness and prophanity finding it self encouraged, and reyns loosed to it, abounded in all parts of the land, to the grief of the truely godly, and the great scandal of the Protestant reformed religion at home and abroad. If it were not for too much prolixity, this might be made to appear from a multitude of undenyable, but lamentable instances; which for brevities sake we forbear, not loveing to stir in this filthy puddle. 3. As to the Government of the Church in particular, the case was wholly altered, from that of our worthie Predecessors, in the former Prelats time: for, as prelacy was then subtilly brought in upon them, by degrees, and not all at once; so they continued in the possession of the Government of the Church, that had been setled by law, and never legally or actually disinabled to meet, and exercise the same, in their fixed and ordinare judicatories: but continuing as formerly in Presbyterated meetings, had the Prelats thrust in upon them; as is evident from history, even of *Spotiswood*; But in our case, Prelacy is at the first raised by law to its greatest height; Presbytery discharged, cashiered and ejected out of this Church; all lawes for it, either in late or former times, being disanulled and abrogated; the meetings of Ministers in their fixed Presbyterial and Synodical assemblies inhibited, under severe penalties by acts of Councel, which became so universally obeyed, that Presbytery had neither a legal nor actual being, in the time that Prelacy was erected & brought in upon this Church: So that at its actual introduction, we were conforme to

Lawes, required to come in, ſubmit to, and con-cur with the government ſetled by them, which was purely Prelatical and *Eraſtian*. They that deny this muſt contradict the law, and make the law-makers liars. if the laws and actings conforme thereto have any ſenſe, that may be rationallie deduced therefrom. Hence, what was required was directly contrare to our principles & known judgment, which to this day, we never ſaw any convincing reaſons, to make us relinquish, Here we cannot, but complean of the palpable injuſtice, done us by the Author of the *ſeaſonable caſe* (falsly ſo called) who contrare to all evidence, makes the caſe now and then alike. But notorious lies and untruths muſt be made uſe of to fill up the roome of truth, ſo shamefully deſerted by that party. 4. The government of the Church that then was, was by law totally ſubverted, and Prelacy brought in its place, at and by the meer authority of the King; the government thereof by a preceeding law or act being wholly put into his hands, (the authority of Parliament interpoſed afterwards for the eſtablishing of prelacy, being by this only corroborative and precarious;) asif it were only of his frameing and making, and had no higher detivation, but that of humane authority; which we look upon, as an high derogation of the Regal and Supream authority of Chriſt Jeſus, the alone Head and King of his Church; and a dreadfull preſumption in changing the laws and ordinances, enacted and inſtituted by Him in his houſe; which all Chriſtians, eſpecially Proteſtants, eſteem ſacred and inviolable. Can we, according to the principles we have received and drunk in, from the word of the

the liveing God, allow of this forme of Government, this way introduced into the Church? Thoſe that love eaſe, and things of this world, may think light of all; but it is not ſo to us, who are, through grace, reſolved to owne no other Head of that body, (then Chriſt Jeſus) of whom we profeſſe ourſelves members. The recent and fresh memory of the National and Solemne League and Covenants; under the tye of which this Nation and Church came oftener then once; all rankes and degrees of perſons, Noble and Ignoble, from the Kings Majeſty to the loweſt Subject, being ſolemnly engadged thereby againſt the evils and corruptions ejected by them. The obligation of which had been enforced, and legally ſecured by a continued ſeries of lawes and practiſes, for a long time, that ſeemed to promiſe all imaginable ſecuritie, to the work of Reformation, againſt the outmoſt aſſaults of its adverſaries: nothing was left undone, that could be attempted by rational men in this caſe. While all theſe things were in being, and recent in the memory of all, at home and abroad, at one dash, in ſo little a time, to raze to the foundations, all the former ſuperſtructure, and build up the contrare; and that by perſons, who, (for their generality) had been ſo active for, and ſo deeply engadged in former proceedings, is ſtrange to think on; eſpecially conſidering the verbal ſecurities, and engagments made unto us, immediatly before this change. We ſay, in this caſe; to give the concurrence and complyance required, in joyning with and receiving the Prelats and their Creaturs, is, beyond all queſtion, an approving of all that was done contrare to our fixed judgments & theſe obligations,

we, with the reſt of this Church came under. Let any man of conſcience put himſelf in our caſe, & ſuppone our judgment & principles to be his owne; and then let him judge, if he would not finde himſelf neceſſitated to carry, in this matter, as we have done.

Obj. Some aſſert that they, never having taken on the perſonal obligation of the Covenants, are not bound by them; for which they offer irrefragable arguments, but yet ſee it fit to hold them in. *Anſ.* However there are two things we are ſure of, *Firſt*, All Miniſters, that entered into the Church in the time of Presbytery, were taken engadged for the government of the Church, that then was, in oppoſition to Prelacy: and in or neer the time that Prelacy was a bringing in into this Church, Miniſters in many Presbyteries & Synods, declared their reſolutions for adhereing to Presbytery, that then was in being, & had been exerciſed in this Church, for many years preceeding that time; but it is like (as their after carriage did make out) that theſe are knots they can eaſily looſe; ſeing they are able to maſter & overcome far greater. *Next.* That Church Covenants in the maters of God, which by vertue of divine commands & inſtitutions do antecedently bind, do obleige all in the Church, both in the time or afterwards; and that with this adventitious and ſupervenient obligation of a Covenant, beſide the former. He hath a ſtout conſcience that will get this denyed, it is ſo evidently manifeſt from *Deut.* 29: 10. &c. they muſt be arguments of iron & ſteell, that will break this Scripture in pieces. Theſe who aſſert the contrary, ſhall do well to try their ſtrength, on what the anſwerer of Mr. *Gilbert Burnets* firſt *dialogues* hath on this Subject, that have not yet received a reply.

But

But it ſeems it is a piece of new policy, to make up the weakneſs of arguments, with big ſwelling words.

We might here conſider a little (if our purpoſed brevity could permit it) what one, in a certaine *manuſcript*, hath undertaken to prove in ſeveral propoſitions: but his miſtaking of the queſtion in the ſecond propoſit on, makes us eaſy work; it being a truth we do not deny, and in which we cloſe with our predeceſſours: ſo that all his citations of ours are to no effect: for we grant that the ſin of fellow worſhipers is no juſt ground for withdrawing from publict ordinances, where there is no juſt exceptions beſide; will it from thence follow, that we ſhould ſubmit to and hear the Curates in our preſent caſe? we muſt have other arguments then any he there produceth, before we ſubject to ſuch: neither is it a ſufficient argument, he uſeth in the 6. propoſition; that they are Miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt: Suppone it be ſo, yet the conſequence is wide: we aske at them, if they think it lawful to hear and receive ordinances from our ejected and inhibited Miniſters? If they do; how comes it that they do not hear our Miniſters, but diſſwade the people from it? If they judge hearing of us unlawful; they muſt either ſay that our Miniſters are no Miniſters; or els that Miniſters may be withdrawn from and not heard, although they be Miniſters of Chriſt Jeſus: and conſequently it will follow from their own opinion, and practice anent us, that there are ſome things for hearing and receiving of ordinances, from any perſon, beſide there being Miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt: Or els the charge of ſchiſme, and ſeparation, will fall as heavy on themſelves, for not hearing and receiving of ordi-

nances from our Miniſters, as on us. But enough of this. Whoever reads that manuſcript, will find it ſufficiently anſwered in this ſhort touch, for all his arguemgs are againſt his owne ſhadow, and miſſe the mark he ſhould ſhoot at.

To shut up this wearyſome and unpleaſant ſubject; In the laſt place, we are charged with all the profanity, wickedneſs and enormous practices, that are commited, and do, ſince the erection of Prelacy, abound in the Land: yea our meetings for worship, (now branded with the anciently odious name of *Conventicles*, with which aſſemblies of Chriſtians in the primitive times were noted, and deſigned by their perſecutours) are given out and repreſented to the world, as the cauſe inductive to theſe horrid & abominable ſcandals, which are boldly aſſerted to be acted & commited at them, in a paper of greivances, given in from the Dioceſan Synod of *Glaſgow*, in Prelat *Lightons* time, and preſented to the then Kings Commiſſioner, the *Duke* of *Lawderdal*, and the honourable privy Councel, by the *parſon* of *Glaſgow*, *Mr. Arthur Roſſe*, and now Prelat of *Argile*, that impudent and viperous Calumniator, who, from the pulpit, & other places, uſeth to father all the ſcandals of the time, on our party and their meeting? *Anſ.* paſſing that Prelats malicious and venemous railings againſt us, (as not worthy of our notice) whoſe notour and manifeſt lies, his bitter invictives, and ill grounded aſſertions; (which not only ſpeaks his heart and tongue to be ſet on fire of hell, but renders him diſliked and odious to many of his owne party) we ſay. 1. From whence came that fearful deluge of all ſorts of profanity and wickedneſs that filled the Land,

before, at, & after the laſt erection of Prelacy, and for a conſiderable time, when there were few or no Conventicles? We have not forgetten (and we hope, the ſober and humble, that mourne for the abominations done in the midſt of us, will not) with what a Spirit of impietie Prelacy entered into this Church, and followed it, for a long time: could our meetings for worship (called *Conventicles*) be the cauſe of theſe, when they were not, and had not a being? 2. We beg of our oppoſites, that they will aſſigne us the cauſe of the open reigning ſcandals, found in them that follow not our meetings, but keep and adhere to theirs, eſpecially in the places, where there are no Conventicles, but an univerſal ſubjection to Prelacy? That there are ſuch impieties reigning without any controll, in theſe parts, is paſt all denyal? And what will our adverſaries give for the cauſe of theſe? Surely they cannot, with any ſhew of reaſon, Father them on our meetings. 3. Is it not obſerveable, yea obſerved by all, that, in places drowned in ignorance, ſin and wickedneſs, where Conventicles have come, and at this day are in uſe, a ſenſible reformation in perſons and families hath enſued thereon, and that to the reſtraining of theſe ſcandalous impieties, that prevailed in theſe bounds before, and the ſhameing of theſe that yet live in them: can that be the cauſe of ſcandals, that in experience, is alwayes found to be the effectual means of reſtraining and removing of them? 4. While we caſt our eyes about us, to diſcover the grounds, on which they fix this greivous and heavy charge, it does not appear to us, ſo much as to give the leaſt degree of probability to it; yea, the evidence of the contrare is ſo clear and full, that

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we cannot think, our adverſaries do beleeve themſelves in theſe and other reproaches, they load us with. Sure we are, they cannot binde this charge on the doctrines we profeſſe, and are preached in our meetings, which are contained in our printed Confeſſions of faith, long ſince emited to the world, eſpecially in the Confeſſion of faith, the larger and shorter Catechiſmes, compoſed by the Aſſembly of divines at *Weſt Minſter*. We earneſtly beg of our Antagoniſts, that they will give inſtances, in any of theſe doctrines, (if they can) that of themſelves do tend to licenciouſneſs and profanity? Upon a review of the whole of our doctrine, in its ſeveral parts, we cannot pitch upon one, except the doctrine of juſtification by faith only, throw the alone merits and blood of Chriſt Ieſus, maintained by all proteſtants, except ſome, who of late do aſſert the intereſt of good works, as a preexiſtent condition of a ſinners juſtification before God, which yet is not directly and poſitively done, but by indirect wayes and hints, as is to be ſeen in Mr *Gilbert Burnets* firſt dialogues, *Patrick the Pilgrim*, and the Author of the *whole duty of Man*, who reſolve a ſinners juſtification before God, in his ſerious purpoſe and endeavour of good works, at leaſt, as a preexiſtent condition of it: which is not only againſt the doctrine of all proteſtants till of late (as is to be ſeen in their writings) but directly againſt the great Apoſtle *Paul*, in his Epiſtles to the *Romans* and *Gallatians*; whoſe arguments in that mater, when our adverſaries have anſwered them, we ſhall conſider at more length. All the reaſons they give for this charge, from the head, are ſo fully anſwered by that Apoſtle in the 6. *Chapter* of the Epiſtle to the *Romans*,

mans, and 2. to the *Galatians* towards the close, that we judge it needlesse to insist any further on this. We do not charge all of the Prelatical party with this corrupt doctrine; some of them, particularly doctor *Tully*, hath so clearly and soundly asserted and vindicat the doctrine of Protestants in this mater, against the exceptions and arguments of the contrare minded, that he if living deserves thanks from all the Protestant Churches of Christ, in this and other parts of the Christian world: A doctrine that hath been esteemed fundamentall among them, and given as one great characteristick betwixt us and Papists; yea, it hath been looked upon as the note and signe of the *resurgentis aut cadentis ecclesiæ*, as she holds to or departs from the same. We are not so antiprelatical, as not to love truth, wherever we find it, and the asserter thereof for its sake, although differing from us, in some other things. 5. It is thought sufficient ground for this charge, that some, yea many of the persons that come to and haunt our meetings, are found not to be conscientious and Christian in their walk, but flagitious, or, in many of their practises, scandalous? We cannot think our adversaries are serious in this, & do beleeve as they speak, seing. (1) This does fall as heavy, and will, to onlookers, reflect as much, and more, on the objectors themselves, as on us; whose meetings for worship are found to be the sinck of all debauched and profaine persons thorow the Land; can they refuse this? It is like, the foresight of this forced them to say, in their lybel of greivances against us, that the abominations mentioned in one Article, were commited at our meetings, and not by persons present at them; otherwise their assemblies

ſemblies for worship should have been as chargeab
therewith, as ours: but in this our Antagoniſts a
like to the perſecutours of the Chriſtians in the pr
mitive times, who charged them for having theſe o
the like abominations commited at their aſſemblies
as is to be ſeen in Church Hiſtories. The Lord delive
us from, and rebuke the lying Spirit, that is entered
into and poſſeſſeth many. (2.) But if the preſence of
wicked and ſcandalous perſons, at the aſſemblies of
Chriſtians for hearing of the word, and performing
of other acts of worship, be ſufficient ground for
chargeing the wickednesse and impieties of ſuch on
them, as the cauſe inductive to ſcandals; will not
the aſſemblies, that Chriſt, his Apoſtles, Miniſters
and Chriſtians keeped in all ages, be as lyable to this
charge, as we, who excluded none, but admited
all to the hearing of the word, and ſome other acts
of worship, as is manifeſt from Scripture and Hi-
ſtory: whatever our adverſaries will ſay for clearing of
Chriſt Ieſus, his Apoſtles, &c. will acquit us. (3.)
Do not men know, that in preaching of the Goſpel
to ſinners, we should deſigne and labour their conver-
ſion, as much as the edification of the converted?
Is not the Goſpel, with which Miniſters are intruſt-
ed, the mean and power of God to the one, as well as
to the other? And ſeing this is our deſigne, as it hath
been our practice, ſo it is our reſolution, not to ex-
clude any from our aſſemblies, how wicked ſoever
they have been, or are: Truth is, to charge us and our
meetings, with the ſinnes and ſcandals of thoſe that
frequent the ſame, is to reproach the Goſpel of
Chriſt, and to Father all the wickednesse of its hearers
on it, contrare to its grand deſigne, which is to ſave

ſinners

ſinners from ſin, and all the miſeries that follow upon it.

SECT. V.

Some Reaſons, why the Indulgence *was not accepted.*

IN the next place, we come to the head of the *Indulgence*, the not allowing of which, hath been repreſented, as a full evidence of our pivish, wilful, and ſtiff diſpoſition to unpeaceableneſs and diſloyalty: but we hope, when our carriage, in this mater, is ſeriously thought upon, and the reaſons that determined us to this refuſal, are weighted in the ballances of the ſanctuarie; this charge will be found light: and we are confident, that upon trial, it will appear, we are not againſt, but with all expreſſions of thankfulnes, ſhall be ready to intertaine, and receive any libertie for the Goſpel its true intereſt, and our ſelves (that is conſiſtent with our known principles) that the Magiſtrat ſhall be pleaſed to grant us. We look upon it, as an unjuſt ſtate of the queſtion, in this mater, which hath been offered by ſome: whether the Magiſtrat, *jure*, may, or have it within the compaſs of his Magiſtratical power, to give liberty, to Miniſters and people, for ſerving and worſhiping of God in his Son Chriſt Ieſus, according to his word; this we do not deny, but chearfully grant, that although the exerciſe of Church power, that is properly ſuch, be independent on the Magiſtrat; yet the peacable exerciſe of it is truely from him: it belongs to him, no doubt, to encourage,

courage, countenance and protect the Church, against all enemies, and to relieve her of oppression when under it: to this he is impowered, and oblidged, both as a Magistrat and as a Christian. Neither is it with us a question, whether the Magistrat may command Ministers to the duties of their function; nor whether he may exeem them from the hazard of suffering, to which they are obnoxious by law, for their non-conformity; nor yet whether he may confine Ministers, simply and abstractedly considered from our present case (which is only proper to the Magistrat, and not all to the Church.) All these and much more we yeeld to the Magistrat, about persones and maters Eccleſiastical, according to the Word. But the true state of the question to us, is, whether the Magistrat *Jure Magistratico* may of himself and immediatly without the Church, & the previous election of the people, assigne and send Ministers to particular Churches, to take the fixed and pastoral oversight of them; prescribe rules and directious to them, for the exercise of their Ministery; and confine them to the said congregations. The question thus stated being complex, and consisting of several branches, conform to the acts of Councel anent the *indulgence*; we must of necessity (for giving a just accompt of the grounds of our dissatisfaction therewith) speak to them severally, in some assertions with the reasons subjoyned.

Assertion First, The Magistrat, by vertue of his Magistratical power, cannot of himself and immediatly, assigne or send Ministers to particular congregations, to take the pastoral charge and oversight of them. For 1. We finde not in all the Word of

of God, any ſuch power, given to, or exerciſed by the Magiſtrat, in the Church: none hath yet given any inſtances of this: if there be, let them be produced, and we ſhall acquieſce. All acknowledge the Church not to be founded on the law of nature, but on poſitive inſtitution, and ſupernatural revelation; and therfore not to be governed in wayes and methods of Mens invention, but in theſe that are revealed by the Holy Scriptures; without which there cannot be a Church; ſo that she owning her being, conſtitution, and all to them; there muſt be ſome evident proof produced from theſe, before we can yeeld to any ſuch power in the Magiſtrat: how long ſhall we exſpect this? (2.) Alſo, we finde the Church in the poſſeſſion and exerciſe of this power, from the times of the Apoſtles, to the breaking up of the reformation by *Luther*, and others in *Germany*: as is manifeſt from Scripture and Hiſtory. We grant, there was for ſome time, a conſiderable debate betwixt the *Pope* and the *Emperour* of *Germany*, about the inveſtiture of Biſhops; which gave the riſe to other Princes claming of the ſame, & ſeaſing upon it: but what ſays this to the miſſion of Miniſters, & application of their Miniſtery to particular congregations? For as Prelacy was the invention of men, and the cauſe of horrid contentions in Churches and States; ſo neither it, nor the practices occaſioned thereby, can be any regulating precedent for us: beſides, in all theſe conteſts about inveſtituts, betwixt the Pope and Princes, the miſſion of Miniſters was never queſtioned, but alwayes acknowledged, as proper to the Church, and not to the Magiſtrat, which will be clear to any that will be at pames to

read Church Hiſtory. (3.) The ſending of Miniſters to particular congregations, is an act of government, purly and formally Eccleſiaſtical, and not Civil; and therefore incompetent to the Magiſtrat: Let any conſider it, in its cauſes, mater, object and ends, and they ſhall finde it ſo: for the perſons ſent are Miniſters; the work they are ſent on, is to preach the Goſpel and diſpenſe its ordinances; theſe they are ſent to, are the Churches of Chriſt; the end for which they are ſent to ſuch, is to gather in and perfect the body of Chriſt; this is *finis operis*. We know of nothing that can beſaid againſt this; But that it is not purely Eccleſiaſtick in the efficient cauſe? *Anſ.* To this we reply, *Firſt*, That all uſe in morals to ſuſtaine the validity of the Arguments, taken from the nature of the act, to the unduenes's of it to ſuch, and ſuch cauſes: for itis by the reſpect of ſuch acts in morals, to their mater, objects and ends, that the bounds are determined, and ſet to them in their effieient cauſes; for inſtance, if the mater, object & ends of an act be properly civil, it is granted by all, to be undue or incompetent to a Miniſter of the Goſpel, & ſo of other acts, in their moral ſpecifical diſtinction, by which, in the law of God, they are aſſigned & made due to ſuch and ſuch efficients. But *Next*, Upon this reaſon, it ſhall be as lawful for the Magiſtrat to ordaine, and ſend perſons without ordination, to preach the Goſpel, which is every way abſurd. (4.) The ſendmg of Miniſters to preach the Goſpel, and to overſee Churches is an act of the poteſtative miſſion, (one part of the keyes of the kingdom of God) granted by Chriſt to his Church, and never to the Magiſtrat: from no part of the word can it be made

appear, that Christ hath given this power to the Magistrat; we hope it given to the Ministers of the Gospel, *Matth.* 16: 19. with several other places of Scripture: But, as to the Magistrat, there is *altum silentium*. But that this sending of Ministers, is an act of potestative mission, we hope will not readily be denied: if any do; we ask, whether Ministers go to such congregations, on a special delegation from Christ, more then to others? If they do, then it must flow from this power of mission in the Church; If they go not, on this special delegation, then they run unsent, and are not the Pastours of these flocks, more then of others; and consequently they have no obligations upon them to feed these, more then any other congregation: which is absurd. For, beside the power of preaching and dispensing of ordinances, there is alwayes a special delegation of the person, to such and such a people, by which he becometh the Ambassadour & messenger of Christ Jesus, whom they are bound to hear and submit to, as such. (15.) This act of sending Ministers to congregations, suppons several things, that are beyond the line and cognition of the Magistrat, as such; as the trial of Ministers gifts; the knowledge of the spiritual State of the congregation; the suitablness or unsuitablness of Ministers gifts to such and such a people; ability to judge and cognosce in these, as the mater and ends of this work require; with many other things, which not being granted to the Magistrat as such, the work, to which these are necessarily requisite, cannot belong to him: for every work, to which God calls any, hath its proper furniture of gifts and abilities, without which, none is to look

upon themſelves as called thereto. (6.) Some of the great Patrons and zealous Promoters of the Magiſtrats power in this, and other things belonging to the Church, yeeld, that this power is in, and returns to the Church, when the Magiſtrat is either heathenish or heretical, as *Vedelius*; yea all are conſtrained to grant it. How rational this is, and how conſiſtent with their arguments (the force of which is thereby utterly broken), let any judge: we ask, when this power is granted to be in the Church, whether it comes from Chriſt Ieſus, or the Magiſtrat? (For a derivc power it muſt be:) It cannot be from the Magiſtrat, who does not willingly part with any of his power; neither does religion robe the Magiſtrat of his power, nor depoſe him from his regality, and the prerogative thereof; as Proteſtants maintaine againſt the Papiſts: if it be derived and come from Chriſt (as it does) we deſire to know, what way it is conveyed to her, in this caſe, and not in the other, when the Magiſtrat is Chriſtian? As we finde no difference of caſes anent this mater given in the word; ſo we finde the ſame inſtitutions, precepts and examples therein, by which the Church is impowered and oblidged, to exerciſe this government without the Magiſtrat, to continue, not only without any reſtrictions to times & caſes, but without any repail. We hear nothing from our adverſaries, to anſwer this, but *ineptia*, foolish rovings. The truth is, their Arguments conclude, with as great force, againſt all power of government in the Church, under perſecuting Magiſtrats, as Chriſtian: for is there not in this caſe the erecting of an Empire in an Empire, which our enemies accoundt

and

anddo not Miniſters, and Chriſtians, owe as much ſubjection to the Magiſtrat, in the one caſe, as in the other?

Aſſertion 2. That the right and power of Election and calling of Miniſters to particular congregations, is in the congregations themſelves, to whom they are ſent, by divine right; and not in the Magiſtrat: and therefore should not have been aſſumed by the Magiſtrat, and taken thus from them. That this power of election of Miniſters, is not in the Magiſtrat, either by divine, humane or Eccleſiaſtical laws, needs not to be much inſiſted on, ſeing Scripture and antiquity, for a thouſand years after Chriſt, gives not the leaſt ground for it. We deſire to know from our Antagoniſts, *Prelats* and *Eraſtians*, from whence came this power; or who were the givers of it to the Magiſtrat? When they have condeſcended on the orginal derivation of this power, and made it out to be juſt, then we shall conſider it; which by none of theſe parties hath been yet done; except by *Vedelius*: but on ſuch grounds, as give every particular member of the Church as good clame thereto, as he; as will be evident to any that conſiders his Arguments: for Scripture and antiquity they have none. The firſt part of the propoſition, is that which is moſt ſtuck at; The peoples right and power of election, which is denyed by our adverſaries: but we thus make it out, as our Divines have done before us. (1.) From Scripture practice and example, *Acts.* 1: 15. to the end, *Chap.* 6: verſ. 1. to 9. and 14: verſ. 13. where we have Arguments both from the more to the leſſe, and from the leſſe to the more; which are acknowledged by all, to be concluding Topicks.

and much used in the Scriptures. When our adversaries have the like from Scripture and antiquity, how use they to insult; but poor we must not be allowed this liberty. (2.) It is evident from the constant practice, use and custome of the Church, from the Apostles times, till the *Popes* of *Rome* inhanced and swallowed up all power and priviledges; either in taking them away, or bringing them into an absolute dependance upon them. For this we appeal to the records and histories of the Church, yea to the histories of the Pops; *PLATINA* and others: in many of which, we shall not only finde the uncontrolled use of the peoples election mentioned; but its right justified and defended, and many canons of Councels made for its regulation, and against the encroachments, that were by some made upon it: in a mater so clear, and granted by the adversary, we need not spend time. If any ask us, why we plead antiquity here, and reject it anent Prelacy? Our Answer is, because we finde in this question, as it is stated betwixt us and the adversaries, antiquity full and clear, which it is not in the other. Let the State of the question about Prelacy, as it is now agitated betwixt us, be in every part of it, brought to the pure times of antiquity; and if it can be evidenced & made out, even as to the sole power of ordination & jurisdiction, and superiority of some Ministers over other Ministers of the Gospel; and we shall yeeld the cause and quietly submit: but in the business of the peoples right of election, it is beyond all contradiction clear, even in the confession of our Antagonists. (3.) All relations amongst rational creatures that are not founded on nature, & are free, there is alwayes

wayes requisite mutual consent, from which, as its proper cause and foundation, it does result; as is to be seen in all sorts of such relations. It is not denyed, but yeelded by all, that there is a particular special relation betwixt a Minister and the Congregation, he in ordinare serves: we desire to know, what is the cause or foundation of it, if it be not this? All other relations of this kinde are founded upon consent; and why not this? (4.) The good effects that have come to the Church by the free and voluntar election of the people, where it hath been admited, and in use. confirmes us not alittle in this perswasion: we have obseved in universal experience, that not only a more universal and chearful subjection hath been given to the Ministry of those, that entered this way into congregations; but a faithful and able Ministry hath been more generally propagated, to the great advantage of immortal souls: if we may gather the nature of the tree, by the fruit, we cannot say, this is evil; but truly good.

Assertion 3. It belongs not to the Magistrat to prescribe Rules, and give Directions to the Ministers of the Gospel, for regulating the exercise of their Ministry, as is done in this *indulgence*. Our reasons for this, are (1.) We see no precept, institution, and example in all the Scriptures, impowering the Magistrat to this; we hope, none will expect we should receive and subject to a power, that hath no warrant nor foundation in the word; seing all church power owes its descent and derivation from it: our Antagonists themselves grant, that not only the power they ascribe to the Magistrat, is in and from the Scriptures; but the regulation of its exercise,

should be conforme thereto; ſo that there will be no debat about the conſequence. The great Patrons of *Eraſtianiſme* plead the inſtances of *David* and *Solomons* ordering the courſes of the *Levits* and the prieſts, and of other things relating to the worship of God, in the time of the old Teſtament; but to little purpoſe: ſeing they acted therein as Prophets, and at the directions and inſtructions given from God, by the Prophets; and not as Magiſtrats; as is clear from the very letter of the Scriptures, in many places, 2 *Chron.* 29: verſ. 25. and 35: verſ. 15. with others: If the Magiſtrats of our time, did produce ſuch warrant for what they aſſume to themſelves, and do in this mater, how readily should they be obeyed? But the *Objection* of greateſt ſeeming ſtrength, is that of *Hezekias* practiſe, keeping of the paſſeover in the ſecond moneth 2. *Chron.* 30, 2. which conforme to the inſtitution *Exod.* 12. ſhould have been obſerved in the firſt moneth? Our *Anſ.* to this is, *firſt*, if this practiſe be pleaded for a leading example to Magiſtrats; it will warrant Magiſtrats to change things inſtitute by God, which, we hope, all will ſay is abſurd. *Obj.* It was but the circumſtance of time that he changed? *Anſ.* a command or inſtitution makes circumſtances, determined by it, as unalterable by men, as the ſubſtantials of the ordinance it ſelf: does not this, if it be concludent, impower the Magiſtrat to change our Sabboth, from the firſt to the ſecond, or any other day in the week, as he pleaſeth? What may not come in at this dore? *Next*, Our ſatiſfying Anſwer to this is, that what *Hezekiah*, the Princes & Congregation did, they did it, at or by the word of the Lord concerning this alteration, and

not

not of themſelves, as is expreſs vers 12. (2.) As it is uſual for commiſſions given to Ambaſſadors, by thoſe that ſend them, to containe all neceſſary inſtructions, for regulating their carriage, in the diſcharge of their ambaſſage; ſo we finde in the Word of God rules, precepts and directions, given to the Miniſters of the Goſpel, about the ordering of the worship of God, and the exerciſe of their Miniſtery in all its parts; which not only impowers them for this work, but brings them under as ſtrait Obligations to obſerve the ſame, as the work and maine ſubſtantials of the ambaſſage, on which they are ſent: for this let 1 *Cor.* 14. two Epiſtles to *Timothy* with other Scripturs be conſulted; and we doubt not but this will be beyond diſput with the unprejudged. If the *Eraſtians* could give us ſuch commands and precepts in the word, for the Magiſtrats power in this, how would they triumph, and ſo they juſtly might; for they should have no ſuch willing and cheirful aſſenters to them. then we; if any ſuch thing could be shewed. (3.) This power in the Magiſtrat would ſubject Miniſters to and bring them, in the exerciſe of their miniſterie, in a dependance on him; the contrare of which we have proved before, and shall do more afterwards: The truth is, we tremble to think on the conſequences of this dependance; for thereby the Magiſtrat may ſuſpend the miniſtry, in theſe parts and exerciſes of it, that Chriſt Jeſus cals them to, in the ſtated caſes of the times, in which they live; as for inſtance, when hereſies are abounding, and Profeſſors taken with the infection of that leaven, he may put them on the preaching of doctrines not appoſite to the preſent caſe, and diſcharge them from

meddling with doctrines contrare to the present errours; as our Magistrats have done anent some doctrines in these times: he may likewise forbid them preaching against, or censuring of these sinnes that are reigning in the place and time, in obeying of which, Ministers shall crosse the commands of Christ to them in his word, and bring themselves under the guilt of the blood of soules. If Churches and Ministers be not, in the commands, precepts, and institutions of God, exeemed from the power and impositions of men, what a sad case will they be in? (4.) The Church had and exercised this power from Scripture times in all ages, till within these hundereth years. We grant the Magistrat exercised a power about, or anent the Church; but never came this length: when they did reforme, & gave any redress of corruptions, creept into the administrations of holy things, they did it by the Church; whom, in her officers, they did convocat, and require to consider the mater, and to make constitutions about it; but never essayed to do it immediatly, and by themselves; as Church Histories make evident, beyond all contradiction. (5.) It is the natural right of all moral power, to order and dispose its owne exercise, in and about the Maters that are proper to it; as might be made to appear by instances of these of the Parental, Marital Powers, &c. and the reason is, partly, because the objects and other circumstances are so many and various; that it is not possible to prescribe rules, comprehensive of all particular emergents, relating to their exercise, but must be left to the prudence of those invested with them, to do therein, as they see fit and expedient, in the cases that are before them

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and partly such are fittest, as having more knowledge and experience about such things, than belongs to their power, then any others. We see this yeelded to others, and why then not to Ministers, who may, in rational judgment, be presumed, to have more solide knowledge and experience, in and about the maters of God, as any? (6.) All divines (except those called *Erastian*, who are but of a late edition in the Church) yea the Prelatical ones, doe grant a *diataktik* power to the Ministery of the Gospel, about the worship and government of the Church, and the exercise of their Ministry relating thereto: and till ERASTUS the phisitian arose, it was beyond controversie among all Church writers, whether Historical or Polemick, even those, who contended for the Magistrats power, against the usurpations of the *Pope*; as is to be seen in their Tractats; from which we might addduce citations not a few; but fearing they wold prove too tedious, if inserted here, We forbeare.

Assertion 4. Albeit we grant, the power of confinement be proper to the Magistrat, and not at all to the Church (for to him only is the sword given, to be used against evil doers;) yet in the complex case, which we had before us, *we durst* not approve of the *indulgence*, with such a clause; seing we had not (as may be clear to any from what is said above) any other thing, in this mater, to ingadge us, to an acceptance thereof. For the act of indulgence confines the Ministers of the whole party: if it had been but some few; that this confinment reach'd, we would not have said much to it, although the sentence had been unjust. But while we consid-

considered the present universal necessity of the Church, and the obligations on us, to use our Ministery, for answering the same, we could not, with quietness to our consciences justifie nor allow of it as a favour, with such a restraint on our Ministry. If the confinment had only touched our persons, and personal concerns, we had with all patience and submission yeelded thereto; but a restraint being put on the exercise of our Ministery, in this necessitous condition of the Church, when *Papists*, *Quakers* and other subverters of truth and godliness, do multiply and abound, without all crub, we could not close with this indulgence; which, by vertue of the confinment, puts us out of capacitie, for affording that relief to the Church and immortal souls, which our office binds us to. (2.) As there are many duties and parts of our Ministerial function, which we cannot perfome and exercise, but in a conjunction with others; so this indulgence cuts off from all accesse to the same, and leaves us in much worse case, then we were in before. Have we not the Gospel of Christ to maintaine against its present adversaries? Are we not bound to propagat the same in the present and succeeding ages? Do not scandals of all sorts abound, to the overthrow of truth and piety? and does not the care and burdine of seeing to and providing against the evil, that in these times, threaten the ruine of the Church, lye upon us in our ministerial capacity? And we cannot singly and apart, doe what is necessare in this case, but in a conjunction with one another: no doubt, our subjecting to this confinment would render us accessory to, and bring us under the guilt of all these evil and their consequences

ces to this, and the following generations. Posterity, no queſtion, should have all cauſe to curſe and charge their blood upon us, which is trembling to think upon. (3.) If we may gueſſe at, and be aſcertained of the ends and deſignes of mens actions, by the native effects and conſequences of them; it is to us apparent and beyond denyal, that the project and intention of this contrivance, was quietly to ruine and bury our cauſe; ſeing by this confinment, and other things in this *indulgence*, all endeavours towards the ſucceſſion of a faithful miniſtery, are cut off, and we brought unto an immediat dependance on the Magiſtrat, in the maters of God, and hindered to propagat the truth, in oppoſition to its adverſaries, in other parts of the land; being thus shut up into a litle corner of the ſame, & caſt by two's & three's and fours, into congregations; where, for the moſt part, there is little or no uſe for us; If the Apoſtles and other Miniſters of Chriſt, in Scripture times, had been thus dealt with, and in policy confined, as we are; do any think, they would have ſubmitted to, and obeyed ſuch a confinment, which would have fruſtrated the ends of their office and work; and made them guilty of diſobedience to their Maſter, from whom they received commands, inconſiſtent with ſuch a ſentence? And shall we ſubject and be conſentient to a deed, that in the deſigne and effects thereof will infallibly deſtroy the cauſe, which, by all ſorts of obligations, we are engadged to maintaine and advance to the utmoſt of our power? God forbid. We are not ignorant, that the confinment, with a permiſſion to preach and exerciſe other parts of our miniſtry, in the places, to which we were to

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be confined; was a piece of policy, invented to cover the too visible encroachment on Church power: in the first act of Indulgence (which was known afterwards to stumble many) that the mater might be more smoothed, and goe the better down; while the designe was the same; which was (as is said) to bring our ministry in subjection to the Magistrat, in the maters of God; and without noise to obstruct the spreading of the Gospel, and to ruine our cause; for attaining of which, we have not yet seen a more successful like piece of policy, then this of the *indulgence*.

Resolveing (as hath been said) to unfold our hearts, and to keep nothing up, anent what is truly grievous to, and burdens our consciences, in the commands and impositions of these times; we shall adde other reasons to these, which, with the former, are the grounds of our dissatisfaction with and non-approbation of this *indulgence*: as (1.) In the Narrative of the 2. *act of indulgence*, it is declared, that this pretended favour is provided for a remedy against the evil of Conventicles, (by which we understand the assemblies of the Lords people for hearing of the word, and partaking of other ordinances from faithful Ministers of the Gospel) which the execution of laws made against the same, hath not suppressed. As this narrative speaks to all, the designe of the *indulgence*; so it shews, what we are to expect as its consequence, if approven by us, to which we dar have no accession, directly nor indirectly; for by our allowance, and submission, we shall not only prove active in hindering the propagation of the word for the future; but also shall consequentially condemne

the former practice of the Lords ſervants and people, in preaching and hearing of the word; that hath been bleſſed, and made not a little ſucceſful, to the advantage of the truth, and the benefite of many ſouls. (2.) Many by this indulgence were aſſigned and ſent to other congregations, then theſe they had formerly ſerved their Maſter in, before this revolution in the Church: As we judge the former relations to particular flocks (over which the Holy Ghoſt, and not the State, had made them overſeers) to be yet in force, and not diſſolved by all the violence uſed againſt us; ſo we think our approbation of this indulgence, would not only juſtify the unjuſt uſurpation, and violence in caſting them out; but likwiſe would have made void the former, and yet ſtanding relation to theſe reſpective congregations, in which we darre have no hand, but in the way Chriſt hath appointed, and was formerly uſed in this Church; ſeing it will, no queſtion, both ſtrengthen the Magiſtrat, in his unjuſt encroachments on the Government of the Church, and be a practical acknowledgement of him, in all he hath done in this mater. (3.) By one clauſe in the 2. *act of indulgence*, appeals are allowed and authorized from the indulged to the Prelats Courts; which does ſubject, and directly ſubordinat them to theſe, in the exerciſe of government and diſcipline, which is known, to be contrare to our Covenanted and well grounded principles. The truth is, we look on this, with other particulars in that *indulgence*, as a device framed of purpoſe, for gaining all theſe ends and intents upon us, which by violence hath been formerly deſigned againſt us, for eſtabliſhing of *Prelacy* and *Eraſtianiſme*. (4.) As

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ſome of the Rules are impracticable, ſo others of them do not a little reflect upon the practiſes of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, recorded by the Evangeliſts, who preached in houſes and fields. If we underſtand our Chriſtian profeſſion aright, we muſt take ourſelves bound by many commands and precepts in the word of God, to imitat Chriſt and his Apoſtles, in their performances of the duties of Religion and righteouſneſs, which are of purpoſe related in the Scripturs for this effect. Do we not find from theſe ſacred records, Chriſt and his Apoſtles preaching in houſes and fields, as occaſions offered, never declining to teach and inſtruct the people in theſe, as the preſent exigence required, although they had the opportunity of and acceſſe to the Synagogues, which is denyed us, as to the places allowed for publict worship? Do not theſe practices of Chriſt and his Apoſtles ſay that, as preaching in houſes and fields, is in it ſelf no ſinne but lawful; (except we reſolve to make Chriſt a tranſgreſſour) ſo in the like caſes, and under the like calls, we are bound to do in this, as Chriſt did before us; who can get this ſhuned?

Amongſt the many deſignes aimed at, in this *indulgence*, and in part obtained by it; we know the deviding and breaking of our party, was a principal one; which at firſt actuated, and ſet on foot this device amongſt us; but, we hope, without the fruit our adverſaries exſpected to have reaped thereby, to the advantage of their cauſe: for, whatever difference there hath been, or yet is amongſt us, in our practice, in relation to the *indulgence*, we are all agreed in the preceeding exceptions againſt it; and if there had been acceſſe for repreſenting the ſame to our

Rulers,

Rulers, your unanimity and concord in these had been more discovered, and made known to the world, then it is. There is no change with us of our known and professed judgment, about the Government of the Church, in its true distinction from, and independence on the Magistrat, as is afterward expressed. What ever was our perswasion in this, represented to the world in our publick confession of faith, we yet, throw the grace of God, resolve to cleave to: having never seen or heard of any thing, in all the times that have gone over our heads, to cause us alter our apprehensions of this mater in the least. Some (who take hold of all occasions to reproach us) are pleased to represent some their acceptance of this indulgence, as contradictory to, and inconsistant with our former professed principles anent Church Government: yet any that considers what was shortly hinted at, to the Councel, at the receiving of this indulgence; and what was more largely declared by them to the congregations, at their first entry, will be sufficiently convinced of our constant adherence to our former principles; which by this acceptance is not at all changed. It is expected from the lovers of our righteous cause, that nothing shall be done by them, toward the furtherance of the evil intents of this indulgence; but rather an endeavour to counteract and ineffectuat them, that our opposites may have no benefite therefrom, to the prejudice of the interests of Christ, for which we contend.

SECT. VI.

The nature of Church Government, *as distinct from and independent upon Magistracy, explained.*

HAving proceeded thus far, and dispatched the first three things, we proposed to speak to, in the beginning, we shall now enter on the last, the *Supremacy Ecclesiastical*, that is now by law annexed to the crown, established in his majesties person and successours, and sensed by law and practice. Let none wonder, we take this ticklish subject into consideration, and dar adventure, to give an accompt of our thoughts of the same, to the world: for we solemnly professe, that on the exactest enquiry and search, that we have been able to make about this mater; we finde it, as diametrically opposite to our true Covenanted principles, as Prelacy; and in its effects, we fear, shall prove as destructive to the Church, and work of Reformation, as any thing that appeared on the field against it: Times past and present speak much to this, but the future will say more: the storme, that this *Supremacy* threatens to this Church and nation, is such, that it is the part of all that wish well to *Zion* to pray instantly day and night, that it may be graciously averted. The truth is, as we look upon it, as an high corruption in it self tending to the subversion of the Churches concerns, in doctrine, worship, and Government; so it lies at the bottome of our non-conformity to the law, in Church maters; and is not only one, but a maine reason, why we

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cannot joyne in Church assemblies, especially for Government; which thereby, in our apprehensions, are made nullities. That our procedour in speaking to this, may be distinct and clear to all, we shall observe this method. 1. We shall consider & speak to the Government of the Church, and shew what it truly is. 2. We shall prove its distinction from, & independency on the civil Government. And 3. Shew how far this Government of the Church is by law lodged in, and exercised by our Rulers, contrare to Scripture and the practice of the Church, till these hundered years past.

For more light to the whole, we shall premise these preliminary considerations or propositions, which, we think, will not readily be denied by any. 1. *Propos.* it is out of our rode, and inconsistent with our intended brevity, to insist on the tearms *GOVERNMENT & CHURCH*, & what is usually signified by them; these we leave to the Criticks and all that write on this subject: but all are agreed in this, that *GOVERNMENT* is a tearme importing power and authority; which is nothing els, but a right to rule others, and an obligation on these invested therewith to use the same, for attaining the ends of Government: So that Government makes its acts due & valide in the person, or persons cloathed with it; & bindes them to all these acts, means & wayes, by which Government is enabled to reach its ends. 2. *Propos.* All created power & authority is originall in God, as the & first cheif cause thereof, & derived from him, as the universal Supreme Monarch, and Governour of all in heaven or earth; hence it necessarly followes, that, as the power that cannot prove its

deſcent from God, is not to be admited; ſo all juſt powers are directly ſubordinat to him as the univerſal head of all; 3. *Propoſ.* that the Church of Chriſt, not being founded in nature, but on ſupernatural revelations, her Government muſt wholly depend upon & flow from it, in theſe things where it differs from other Governments; ſo that the *All* of this Government is by poſitive inſtitution and warrant from God ſupernaturally revealed. 4. *Propoſ.* That Chriſt Jeſus, as Mediator, being made the head of the Church under God; and thereby her Government fountained in him: all powers in the Church muſt be derived from, and ſubordinat to him, as the Supream. 5. *Propoſ.* Beſide the inviſible and internal Government, that Chriſt Jeſus exerciſeth by his Spirit, on the ſouls and conſciences of his people, (that conſiſts in the inward light and power of his Spirit guiding and enabling them to that obedience, he requires of them in his word;) there is likwiſe a true viſible Government of the Church, inſtituted by him, and viſibly exerciſed in her, in his name, as her Supream. 6. *Propoſ.* The Government of the Church (as ſhall be proved afterwards) is not properly, and *in linea directa* ſubordinat to the Magiſtrat, for 1. It hath its derivation from another fountaine, Chriſt Jeſus; who being the Churches Supream head and governour, all power in her muſt come from and depend on him. 2. The Magiſtrat cannot take away, nor change the Government of the Church, which he may do in Governments and powers ſubordinat to him: yea, he cannot impede its exerciſe, in theſe intruſted with it; ſeing they are under obligations for it, antecedent & ſuperiour to theſe of the Magiſtrat.

7. *Propoſ.*

7. *Propoſ.* That the holy Scriptures, being the word and law of Chriſt, as King of his Church, muſt be the inſtrument and rule of the Churches Government, according to which she ought to be ruled, not only in theſe acts of faith and obedience in the inner man, but alſo in the outward. 8. *Propoſ.* Although powers ſpecifically diſtinct be not ſubordinat to one another; yet there may be and is a mutual ſubordination of perſons, inveſted with theſe powers, ſo as the perſons are in different reſpects ſuperiour and inferiour to one another; as *Jeſſe* was to *David* (ſuppoſing him to live in his ſon *Davids* reigne;) which ſubordination of perſons does not take away the deſtinction of theſe powers; nor the mutual ſubjection, the perſons owe to one another: hence we aſſert, that as Magiſtracy does not deſtroy the Miniſtry, nor looſe the perſons cloathed therewith, from the ſubjection they owe, as Chriſtians, to Miniſters, in the right exerciſe of their Miniſtery; ſo neither does the Miniſtery deſtroy Magiſtracy, nor untye Miniſters, as ſubjects, from that ſubjection and obedience due to Magiſtrats from their ſubjects; Miniſters are bound to this as much as any. 9. *Propoſ.* As in all Governments, there are ſomethings that is intrinſick (although viſible) wherein its nature and ſpecifick eſſence does conſiſt, and ſomethings accidental and ſeparable from it, that belongs not to its *eſſe*, but *BENE ESSE*; ſo there are in the viſible Government of the Church, ſomethings eſſential & intrinſick, (of which afterward) and ſomethings accidental and extrinſick, without which it can ſubſiſt, even in its exerciſe. 10. *Propoſ.* Theſe things, in and about which, the Government of the

Church is converſant, are of diverſe ſorts; ſome are purely ſpiritual, as the Word, Miniſtery, Sacraments, and all Ordinances of divine appointment; Others are of a mixt nature, partly ſpiritual & partly civil, as the neceſſary circumſtances and mods of worship and Government; which, although civil in their own nature, and common to other actions, yet partly by reaſon of the general divine appointments, impowering the Church to diſpoſe and order theſe; partly by reaſon of their neceſſary connexion with things purely ſpiritual, are truely Eccleſiaſtick, and become a part of the object of the proper power of Church Government, called by all Divines *DIATACTICK*: Some are properly & purely civil, in their owne nature and immediat ends; as Churches, Stipends, Manſes, Glybs, &c. which, although they be by general precepts ſecured to the Church, and belonging to her; yet they are formally civil, and come directly under the Magiſtrates power, as other civil rights and proprieties do, about which he does execute the judgment of truth & peace.

11. *Propoſ.* It is to be adverted, that there is a twofold ſubordination of powers in Government; one *in LINEA DIRECTA*; and another *in LINEA OBLIQUA*: in the *firſt* ſubordination, the power ſubordinated is derived from, and comprehended in the Supream, and may be impeded, ſuſpended or regulated in its exerciſe, yea totally diſſolved by it; and when exerciſed, it is in the name and authority of the Supream, and wholly dependant, in its regulation, on it; ſo that both the power as ſuch, the perſon intruſted therewith, and its exerciſe, is ſubjected to the Supream. In the *ſecond* kind of ſubordination, the

the ſubordinated power, or rather the perſon in its exerciſe, is only the object of ſome acts of another power; but the power is not derived from it, nor *JURE*, impedible or regulable by it: It is in this laſt ſort of ſubordination, that Magiſtrats and Miniſters are ſubordinated to one another, without all ſubordination of the powers, in their exerciſe; for as Magiſtrats may, yea ſhould command Miniſters, when negligent, to the duties of their function; ſo Miniſters ought, in Chriſts name, to command Chriſtian Magiſtrats to do the duties belonging to their office; and to rebuke them authoritatively, when found acting contrare thereto. 12. *Propoſ.* Theſe ſubjected to created powers, whether Magiſtratical or Miniſterial, being under the ſupream, abſolute and univerſal Soveraignity of God, have a power of judgment and diſcretion granted to them, for cognoſcing on the commands of their ſuperiours, as to their juſtice or injuſtice, or their conſiſtency with, or repugnancy to the commands of God; by which they are to walk in giving or not giving obedience to their ſuperiours.

The way being thus paved, our next work is, to ſhew, what we judge to be the Government of the viſible Church, which we ſhall do in theſe Concluſions. *Conclu.* 1. The Government of the viſible Church largely conſidered, is either Supream or Subordinat: to the Supream belongs the legiſlative power, as the making and enacting of lawes, inſtituting of ordinances, appointing and impowering of officers; and to be the fountaine of all power in the Church. This we aſſert to be only in Chriſt Jeſus; and viſible in his word, ordinances, officers, and the

conveyance of all Church power: in this, none share with him either Magiſtrats or Miniſters. *Concluſ.* 2. The ſubordinat power of Government in the Church, is in her officers, that Chriſt hath appointed and called thereto; which power, is only and immediatly from Chriſt, and exerciſed in his name, over all in the Church, which diſtinction of Church Government makes not different Governments in the head and members; it being one and the ſame Government, truly Monarchical, not Ariſtocratical, nor Democratical. *Concl.* 3. This derived and ſubordinat power in Church officers, when conſidered with reſpect to its mater, in and about which it is exerced, is diverſe: Schoolmen and Divines diſtinguish it, into the *power* of *Order* & *Juriſdiction*; but for explications ſake, and avoiding of all ambiguity, we shall conſider it, in the variety of its objects or mater; and its divers acts about the ſame.

As (1.) To it belongs the diſpenſing of the ordinances of worship, in the publict aſſemblies of the Church, in preaching of the word, praying to (as the mouth of the aſſembly) and praiſing of God: in theſe they act, as the Authorized ſervants of Chriſt, in performing and directing of the worship of God in the Church. (2.) The convocating of the Aſſemblies of the Church, for theſe divine and holy exerciſes; on which all in the Church are bound by divine precepts to attend, as the inſtitute means of worship, converſion, and edification. (3.) The receiving, ordering, and diſtributing of the Charitable contributions of the Church, for maintaining of the poor, and doing of other pious works. (4. Trying,

ing, receiving, and admiting of members into the Church, confirming and ſealing of the ſame by Baptiſme. (5.) Adminiſtring the great ordinance of the Lords ſupper, to the worthy and obedient, conforme to the inſtitution of it in the word. (6. Ejecting and excluding the impenitent and obſtinatly ſcandalous (after due trial and conviction) whether in doctrine or manners, from the Sacraments, and Comunion with the Church in theſe. (7.) Trying, calling, and ordaning of perſons fitted for and willing to engadge in the Miniſtery; according to the rules of the word. (8.) Depoſing and exautorating of Miniſters from the Miniſtery, who, by hereſy or ſcandals, declare themſelves unworthy of, and unfit for the ſame. (9.) Trying, and cenſuring of ſcandals, in perſons found guilty of them (after due conviction) for their recovery, and keeping of the Church pure. (10.) Aſſociating into ſtated & fixed meetings, for carrying on, and doing of the former and ſubſequent work, whether more general or particular, in their due and allowed ſubordination. (11.) Trying and judging of doctrines, whether ſound or heretical, according to the rule of the word of Chriſt, and cenſuring of perſons found unſound in the faith. (12.) Diſpoſing & ordering the neceſſary circumſtances of worship and Government, for decency and order, and the avoiding of confuſion. (13.) Reſolving of doubts and caſes of conſcience, incident to the Church, on any occaſion or emergent. (14.) Indicting of dayes of publict ſolemne faſts and humiliation, or of thankſgiving, as the diſpenſations of judgment and mercy call to the ſame, &c.

Concluſ. 4. This Government of the Church,

as it is in the hands of Church officers, and exercised by them, is purely Ministerial, without all dominion in them; and only *executive* in applying the will of Christ to the members of the Church, as they are found conform or disconform to the same. *Concl.* 5. This subordinat power in Church officers is only *declarative* and *nuncupative*, and not properly *decisive*; they have not power to determine what shall be true or false doctrine, sin or duty; and what censure shall be inflicted on persons heretical or scandalous; but only to declare and apply the will of Christ, and what he hath determined anent these in his word. This power suppons its object, and does not make it. *Concl.* 6. It is wholly limited, regulated by, and restricted to the word and law of Christ, as its basis and rule, beyond which it cannot go; and if it do, its acts are nullities and not obligatory on any. *Concl.* 7. It is purely spiritual, in its mater, manner and ends; and not at all civil: it essentially respects the inner man, and wholly labours (in the wayes appointed) the saving, edifying and perfecting of it. *Concl.* 8. This power is not properly *coercive*, *coactive*, and *compulsive*; but only *exclusive*: that is, if it be not obeyed by them, about whom it is exerced, it does debarre them from, and deny them the benefits, that are offered to all, and promised to the obedient. *Concl.* 9. This power, in the hands of the Church officers, is truly Christs, and when acted in his name, conforme to his lawes, is the exercise of his Supream dominion in and over the Church; By which he truly and visibly reigns over all in her: so that obedience to this power, is obedience to Christ, as King of his Church; and the contrare is high rebellion against him. *Concl.*

10. Although this power be only *Ministerial*, and *declarative* of the will of Christ; yet it is *authoritative*, and binding on all the Church, without exception of persons; and that on a double account, *first* on the account of divine commands enjoyning submission and obedience to its exercise, in the persons of those invested therewith; and also on the account of its respect to, and derivation from Christ, whose power and ordinance it is; and whom, in its exercise, it doeth represent to all. *Concl.* 11. This power is exercised, either singly & apart by every officer (according to the nature & measure of their power;) or in conjunction with one another, conforme to the precepts of the word, and practises of the Church in Scripture times. Although every officer of the Church in their several orders, have the whole power belonging *intrinsice* to it; yet there are some acts thereof, they cannot exerce, but in a conjunction with others, as ordaining of persons for the Ministry. Trying and censuring of scandalous and heretical Professours or Ministers, &c. for which there must be fixed meetings of officers, general and particular. *Concl.* 12. The ordinar officers of the Church (the extraordinare being ceased) are of three orders, Teachers and Pastors; Ruling elders; and Deacons. These we finde to be of divine institution, and no others: Many others have been brought into, and obtruded on the Church, but all of humane, or rather of diabolical invention; as, alace, their effects have sadly made out to the Church of God, in former and present times. In every one of these divine orders, we finde no inticute superiority, in the same order, of one above others; as a Pastor of Pastors; or an Elder

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of Elders; and a Deacon of Deacons: These who have assumed and exercised this superiority we cannot owne, as the Officers of Christ, nor subject to them, as such, till they prove their institution and mission from him; which yet they have not done. The outmost effey hath been for *Prelacy* or a *Bishop*, who is pleaded to be a Pastour of Pastours having the oversight of them and their flocks; but nothing attempted for making out the divine right of *Primats*, *Archbishops*, *Archpresbyters*, *Archdeacons*, &c.

This is that lowly and humble Government of the Church, that Christ hath institute in his word, and put in the hands of his Officers, commanding them to exercise and dispense the same to all in his house, under high paines: of which in the second place we assert these two. 1. That it is distinct and specifically different from the civil government of the Magistrat. And 2. That it is independant on it. These two conclusions we now undertake to prove, against the *Erastians* of our time, who assert, that when the Church comes to be embodyed with the Commonwealth, her Government becomes one with the Government of the State, and does not differ from it.

In opposition to these, we *affirme*, that when a Nation, State or Kingdom turnes Christian, in its Rulers and Subjects, the Government of the Church remaines specifically different and distinct from the Government of that State or Kingdome; as it was before its conversion to Christianity. The reasons perswading us of this, are 1. The Government of the Kingdome, that is not of this world, is distinct and different from the Government of the Kingdomes

domes that are of this world? But ſo it is, that the Government of the Church is the Government of a Kingdome, that is not of this world. Therefore the Government of the Church is diſtinct and different from the Government of the civil Magiſtrat, that is, the Government of Kingdomes that are of this world. This Argument leans on theſe three. 1. That the Church is a Kingdome, 2. That she hath a Government; And 3. That she is not of this world, although in it. All which are beyond diſput clear from the Scriptures. All that our adverſaries ſay to this, is, that the viſible Church of Chriſt, is not properly, but metaphorically called a Kingdome: But how evident is the contrare? for is not Chriſt Jeſus the Churches viſible Head and King? Is she not ruled by his viſible Lawes, Ordinances and Officers, that are properly and truely ſuch? and are not all theſe from above, and not of this world?

Argum. 2. That Government whoſe ſupream Head, Lawes, Ordinances and Officers are ſpecifically different from the Head, Lawes, Ordinances, and Officers of the civil Magiſtrat, muſt be diſtinct from it: But ſo it is that the head, lawes, ordinances and Officers of the Church are diſtinct from the lawes, &c. of the civil Magiſtrat: Therefore, &c. The reaſon of the *firſt propoſition* is clear; for that which makes one Government differ from another, is different heads, lawes, Ordinances & Officers: where theſe are either numerically or ſpecifically different, the Government is different accordingly: it being comprehended in all theſe: but that the ſupream head, laws, ordinances, and Officers of the Church are ſpecifically different, from theſe of the civil Go-

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vernment, who will deny it, that profesſes himſelf a Chriſtian? *Obj.* But all theſe come under the inſpection of the Magiſtrat, when he turns Chriſtian. *Anſ.* 1. Either theſe continue in the Church, under the Magiſtrats Government, what they were before; or they do not: if they do, the Argument holds, and proves the Government of the Church, to be diſtinct from that of the Magiſtrats, when Chriſtian: If they do not continue, we aſk from whence comes this alteration, and how will they prove it? Nothing here from our adverſaries, but *Altum ſilentium*, *or nugæ*, deſtitute of all reaſon. But, 2. The tearm *INSPECTION*, or *OVERSIGHT*, is ambiguous; if by it we mean the countenancing, protecting, and encouraging of this Government of the Church, we yeeld it: but what ſayes that to the confounding of the Governments; or making the Government of the Church, the Magiſtrats: if by inſpection we underſtand, the devolving of the Government of the Church on the Magiſtrat, as the fountaine of it; the ordering and diſpoſing of its exerciſe, the changing thereof at pleaſure, in whole or in part: this we deny, and long have we looked for proofe; but have hitherto met with none.

Arg. 3. The Government of the Church formerly deliniated is incompatible with the civil Magiſtrats; therefore it is diſtinct from his Government. We hope, none will refuſe this conſequence. The *antecedent* is thus proven. (1.) The ſubordinat Government of the Church is purely *Miniſterial*, not *dominative* or *imperial*; it is only *declarative*, and not *deciſive*, not *coactive* and *compulſive*; it is exerciſed in Chriſts Name, and in his ſtead, and is the repreſentative

ſentative of his ſpecial preſence in his Church: theſe are incompatible with the Government of the Magiſtrat, whoſe power is Supream, Magiſterial, and Imperial, coactive and compulſive; and exerciſed in his owne name, &c. (2.) The Magiſtrat cannot, yea may not exerciſe the Government of the Church, being diſenabled thereto, by the commands and inſtitutions of Chriſt, who hath laid the burden thereof on others, and not on him. The moſt grant, the Magiſtrat himſelf may not exerciſe ſome parts of this Government, as ordaining of perſons for the Miniſtery, excommunicating, &c. and why he may do other parts and acts belonging to it, and not theſe, We deſire proofe: all our antagoniſts arguments in this conclude for the whole. *Obj.* But ſome Magiſtrats have exerciſed both powers, as *Moſes*, *Samuel*, *David*, *Solomon*, &c. *Anſ.* Theſe were both Magiſtrats and Prophets; and it is evident from the Scripture, that what they did either in conſtituting or in exerciſing of the Government of the Church, they did it as Prophets, and not as Magiſtrats: we find Magiſtrats, that were not Prophets, attempting it, & reprehended for ſo doing, as *Saul*, *Uzziah*: which ſays, that it did not belong to their Magiſtratical Office.

Arg. 4. That Goverment that is founded upon and regulated by another rule and inſtrument, then the law of the civil Magiſtrat, is diſtinct from his Goverument: But the Government of the Church is founded upon, and ruled by another law or rule, then the Magiſtrats; the law and word of Chriſt: therefore, &c. the *firſt propoſition* is clear, for the Government of the Magiſtrat does flow from and is regulated

lated by his owne lawes, of which he is the sole fountaine: The *second*, we suppose, is undenyable among Christians, who acknowledge the Scriptures for a rule of Doctrine, Worship and Government to the Church of Christ. *Obj.* But there are somethings necessare to the Government of the Church, not contained in the Scriptures? *Ans.* This we deny. For 1. What the Scriptures containe, anent the Government of the Church (if reduced to practice) is able to attaine its ends, and more is not necessary: Let the Church have these, and the work will be done: we make & feigne necessities, but no more is necessar to the ends of the Church Government, then what is determined by the Scriptures anent it. (2.) The ability of the Churches Government, for reaching its ends, lyes not in the innate sufficiency of its instituted means; but in the Spirit of Christ, working with, in, and by them; by which low, weak and despicable wayes, Christ carries on the salvation of his people, that the excellency of the power may be of him, and not of us. (3.) The Scriptures being a full and perfect rule for all maters of faith and obedience, what it containes of, and anent the Government of the Church, must be perfect and sufficient: sure we are, the Churches Government is a good work, and its exercise, acts of obedience to Christ Jesus; anent which it is said 1. *Tim.* 3. The Scripturs are able to make the Man of God perfect, throughly furnished to every good work. (4.) We enquire, when the Church is without a Christian Magistrat, and under the feet of a heathenish persecuting one (in which case our opposits grant her a Government distinct from, and independent on the Magistrat) whether the

the Government exercised in her, be able to attaine its ends. If it be (as the experience of the Church in this case puts beyond doubt) why may it not do the same, under a Christian Magistrat?

Arg. 5. That Goverement that is exercised in the name of another distinct Supream Head, besides the Magistrat, is distinct from the Government of the civil Magistrat. But the Government of the Church is exerced in the name and authority of another Supream head, not subordinat to the Magistrat. Therefore, &c. What can be said to the *first proposition*, we understand not; for all Governments one with, and subordinat to the Magistrat, are exercised in his name and authority: But this Goverument of the Church is exercised in her, in the name of Christ Jesus, by his Officers, as is clear from the word.

Arg. 6. The designations, denominations and relations, in and with which the Church is represented in the Scriptures, do also confirme this truth; she is called the *Body of Christ*, the *Kingdome of Heaven*, the *City of God*, the *House of the living God*, *the new Jerusalem.* As all these do necessarily import a Government in the Church; so they insinuat the same to be different from all other Goverements: Which we may mould into this Argument. That society which is the body of Christ, &c. must have a Government distinct from the Government of the civil Magistrat: But the Church is that society, that is only the body of Christ, &c. Therefore, &c. *Obj.* But all these are said only of the invisible Church? *Ans.* But the contrare is clear from those Scriptures, where these Epithets are given to the Church, 1. Cor. 12. 1. Tim. 3. 15.

Arg. 7. That Government whose immediat and essential ends are specifically different, from the immediat and essential ends of the Magistrats Government, is distinct from the Government of the Magistrat: But here it is so: the essential & immediat ends of Church Government, are different from the essential & immediat end of Magistracy; as will be clear to any that compares them together; The ends of Church Government are the saveing of the soule, the conversion and edification of sinners, &c. The ends of Magistracy, are, the outward publict peace and prosperity of the common wealth, the execution of justice in the maintaining and preserving of propriety, &c. with these the Churches government does not medle, nor intend them; of it self. *Obj.* The Magistrat ought to intend, and endeavour the spiritual happinesse and wellfare of his subjects? *Ans.* We grant this, but as all others ought to do it; for every one in their station are bound to designe and labour the eternal salvation of these under their charge; this being a common end, that all Christians, in their several capacities, should seek after, in their love to one another: the *first proposition* is evident, because the specificall distinction betwixt powers, habits and acts, is taken from their Objects and immediat proper ends; Where these differ, they are by all Philosophers constituted into different species's.

In the next place we *assert*. That as the government of the Church does specifically differ from the government of the Magistrat; so it is independant thereon, and not directly subordinat thereto. A truth (how much soever it be decryed) we are not shamed of, nor affrayed to profess & maintaine: and

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whosoever will lay aside prejudice and earthly interests, and consider these reasons with us, will be forced to acknowledge it.

Arg. 1. The Magistrat is not the fountaine of Church power; it hath not its derivation from him; and therefore is not directly subordinat to him: The consequence is founded on this truth, granted by all Lawyers and Divines, that all power directly subordinat to, and dependant on the Magistrat, is derived from him as the fountaine thereof: the *antecedent* we prove thus. (1.) The Magistrat as a Magistrat is not a member of the Church, but as a Professor of Christianity, which intitles others to this priviledge, as much as him; Therefore he cannot be the fountaine of Church power as such; for whoever is the fountaine of power to any society, is a member, yea the nobleſt member of it; *Obj.* But as a christian Magistrat he is a member of the Church? *Anſ.* 1. What then? will this prove him to be the fountaine of Church power? so might Christian Husbands, Parents, &c. argue as justly for this clame: the truth is, he being only a member of the Church, as a Christian, and not as a Magistrat, Magistracy gives him no more priviledge, then any other power, civil or natural, when the person turnes Christian; for the benefite of membership goes on grounds and reasons common to all Christians, and containes no speciality to one more then to another. If any think Magistracy does, they shall do well to prove it, which none hath yet offered to do. 2. If men understood well, what it is to be a Christian, a disciple and member of Christ's Church, they would quickly see its inconsistency with the said profession,

does not persons, turning Christians, professe subjection to Christ, his Lawes, Ordinances and Servants? which is repugnant to the fountaine of the Church power. (2.) He may not exercise Church power; Therefore is not the fountaine of it: all yeeld, that these who are the fountaine of power to others may exercise it themselves, it being in them, and others acting, as their delegates, in its exercise: that the Magistrat may not exercise Church power, is clear; for Church power, being by positive institution from Christ, they that exercise it must have a commission from him, which none hath produced for the Magistrat: *Erastus* asserteth it, but without all proofe, of which it is so destitute, that the most of his followers have left him in this assertion.

Arg. 2. All Church power is lodged in and immediatly descended from Christ Jesus, as the Supream Head and Ruler of the Church, and Superiour to the Magistrat: Therefore it is not subordinat to the Magistrat: The reason of the consequence is clear, for it is a repugnancy in a power to be immediatly subordinat to two Supream powers, in one and the same respects; especially where the one is superiour to the other: The *antecedent* is manifest, for Christ is only head of the Church; all power in her is institute by him; exerced in his name; astricted to, and regulated by his word; and accomptable to him. All notes of power immediatly descended from him. *Obj.* But the Christian Magistrat, as Christs substitute and vicegerent, is, under him, the neareſt and immediat fountaine of Church power; for *subordinata non pugnant?* *Anſ.* Long hath the *Pope* of *Rome* contended for this, and on grounds more plausible, then

these

theſe, on which the Magiſtrat goes. But Proteſtant Divines anſwer to the Papiſts on this head, furnish us with irrefragable anſwers to the Magiſtrats clame; which we deſire our adverſaries would conſider & anſwer at their own leasure: we finde not the Magiſtrat inrolled among the officers of the Church, far leſſe ſubſtitute for Chriſts vicegerent; if there be any Scripture for this, bring it forth? We know of none as yet alledged by our adverſaries; but what will plead as ſtrongly, for the heathenish Magiſtrat, as for the Chriſtian: And if they do, what traitours were the Apoſtles, Miniſters and Chriſtians of the primitive times, that did not acknowledge the heathenish Magiſtrates for their head in the Church; but reſiſted and diſobeyed their lawes and edicts againſt them, for crying up of another King, in the maters of their Chriſtian Profeſſion.

Arg. 3. All Church power was inſtitute by Chriſt, in an immediat ſubordination to himſelf; without any acknowledgment of, or dependance on the Magiſtrat: Therefore it is not dependant upon, nor ſubordinat to him: The *antecedent* is clear from the Hiſtory of the New Teſtament, where we find, that Chriſt moulded and conſtituted the Church by his Apoſtles, and furnished her with a Government and officers, to be exerciſed in his name; and all this he did without conſulting, or adviſing with the Magiſtrat, or ſuſpending of her upon him; the Magiſtrat all this time reſiſting & ſetting himſelf, for crushing of this Church & Kingdome of Chriſt; which he erected in the midſt of their Kingdomes, making uſe of their rage and violence to eſtablish and propagat it, for ſome Hundreds of years. All this is ſo evident, that

our adversaries are not able to refuse it; what is there then to hinder the consequence, that we draw from this deed of Christ? If our opposites in this mater could shew us, that the Church had no government institute by Christ; nor exercised any, all the time that the Magistrat thus opposed himself to her; or that Christ had declared his will, that she should be subjected to the Magistrat in her Government, when he should become Christian; they would soon end this strife: but nothing can we learne from them to this purpose.

Arg. 4. As this Government was institute by Christ and his Apostles; so it was exerced in his name in the Church, without dependance on the Magistrat, till *Constantine* the great's time; and from thence downe ward, till the Reformation of Religion brack up in *Germanie*: till which time, it was never questioned by any, until *Erastus* the Physician arose, who laboured not only to subject the Church to the Magistrat, in all her concearnes as such; but denied all Government to her by divine institution, that is distinct from the Government of the Magistrat; contrare to full and clear Scripture, which he most insolently and wickedly endeavours to wrest & pervert. So then if the Government of the Church was in Scripture times, and downwards, till within these hundered years, exercised without dependance on the Magistrat, both heathenish and Christian; then it must yet be independant on, and not directly subordinat to him. Here our Antagonists are put to strange shifts; The first three hundred years, they must grant; and may we not take this for a yeelding of the cause? Scripture and antiquity hath been held for a sufficient plea, for maters of doctrine and practice

ctiſe: debates in Polemical divinity hath run on theſe two heads; and whoever made out their aſſertions from theſe, have been eſteemed to carry the cauſe: all that our adverſaries have to ſay to this, are theſe two. 1. That the Government exerciſed in the Church was not by divine inſtitution and precepts; but by confederation of Churches and officers. To this we *reply*. 1. If the Epiſtles to *Timothy*, to the ſeven Churches in *Aſia*. *Revel*. 2. and 3. *Chapters*; with other places of Scripture, uſed by our Divines, in this mater, prove not the contrary, they have no ſenſe: We beg of our adverſaries, they will, for ſaving us a labour, anſwer Mr. *Gilleſpies* Arguments from Scripture, in the ſecond part of his *Aarons Rod bloſſoming*. 2. Beſids they are not able to make out what they aſſert, to wit, that the Church did exerciſe her Government in theſe times, by confederation and mutual conſent; and not by inſtitution and command: for as there is nothing in Scripture and pure antiquity for this; So the Churches being gathered and conſtitute by the Apoſtles, we preſume, they continued in the conſtitutions, which the Apoſtles left, according to the precepts and rules they gave them; to which we find, in the word and Church Hiſtory, their practice conforme. When the perſecutions of the Church ceaſed, upon the Magiſtrats turning Chriſtian, we find her continuing, in the exerciſe of the former Government, (but with the addition of ſome corruptions, which grew to a ſad hight afterwards, throw the exceſſive munificence & bounty of *Conſtantine* the great, the firſt Chriſtian Emperour) and exerciſing the ſame, as formerly; as is clear from Hiſtory, that ſpeaks of theſe times. Here our adverſaries ſpeak

of ſome inſtances of the power, the Magiſtrat did exerce in the Church; as convocating of Synods, labouring in the peace of the Church, ſorely rent at ſome times, through ſad hereſies and ſchiſms; And that ſaying of *Conſtantines* repeated by them, *ad nauſeam: vos eſtis Epiſcopi ad intra, Ego ad extra.* But how is our Antagoniſts concluſion made out by all theſe? will it follow, that becaus the Magiſtrat did convocat Synods, its Government is derived from, & ſubordinat to him? No wayes, for (1.) Albeit the Magiſtrat have a power to convocat the officers of the Church, anent maters relating to his owne conſcience and duty, whether about Church or State; yet this is not privative of the Churches power to convocat her owne aſſemblies, either for worship or government; as we find she did in the primitive times, not only without but againſt his conſent; yea when the Magiſtrat became Chriſtian, she retained and exerciſed this power in aſſembling into ſeveral Synods, without the Magiſtrat. It is true, we do not read of general Synods aſſembled, after this, but by the Magiſtrat, till the *Pope* of *Rome*, claimed this power, and uſurped therein on the Church and Magiſtrat, as he did in all other things, but the vaſtneſs of the Empire, and large extent of the Church (which exceeded its bounds) made this in point of prudence neceſſare, for without the Magiſtrat, it could not eaſily be done. But (2.) Convocating of others, is not alwayes, in its ſelf, an infallible ſigne of a ſuperiour power and dominion over judicatories convocated; as in limited Monarchies, and not abſolute, where the Supream power is lodged in the King and States of the Kingdom; although the

King

King have the power of conveening the States; yet they share with him, in the legislative and executive power, while in being: therefore the illation is bad and not concludent. (4) What imaginable advantage can accrew, to our adversaries assertion, by that saying of *Constantines*, formerly cited? We grant the Magistrat is the overseer of things without the Church; but this will not prove, that the government of the Church, is in and from his hands, and subordinat to him; they must first make it appear by good reason, that her Government is *ad extra*, which they have not yet done, nor never will; for although it be visible in its institution and exercise; yet it is as intrinsinck to, and within her, as her doctrine and worship; which by this sence, will be as much derived from and subjected to the Magistrat, as her Government; seing the one is as visible in its dispensation, as the other.

Arg. 5. The Magistrat may not, yea cannot *jure* impede and hinder the exercise of the Churches government: therefore it is not derived from, nor subjected to him: the reason of this consequence is, what ever power is derived from the Magistrat, and subordinated directly to him, he may suspend, hinder its exercise, yea he may totally remove and annihilat it: this is yeelded by all, and taken for a sure Maxime in Politicks: but the Magistrat may not do this, in the Government of the Church; and that becaus it is of divine institution, and the persons intrusted with, and called to its exercise, are under the obligations of divine precepts and commands for it, which the Magistrat cannot hinder, nor by any deed or command of his, make void. These that deny

this divine institution of Church Government, we refer to the forecited book; where it is strongly pleaded & made out from clear and expres Scriptures in the New Testament. Likwise as he cannot impede its exercise, so he may not nullify its sentences, by himself, which he may do in the sentences passed by all powers, derived from and subordinat to himself.

Arg. 6. The Christian Magistrat, is by vertue of his Christian Profession, bound to subject himself to the acts & exercise of Church Government, in the hand of Church Officers; and is as much obleidged to yeeld thereto, as any other: Therefore Church power is not directly subordinat to him. The antecedent is clear; for all are commanded submission and obedience to Church Officers, in the exercise of their power, in watching, overseeing, and ruleing of the Church *Heb.* 13. 7, 17. to which exercise of their power, we finde Magistrats in the word submitting, as *UZZIA*, who was by the priests, conforme to the law, separated and secluded from the holy things of God, and communion with the Church in these; yea, it is given for the maine cause of all that heavy wrath and judgment, that came on *Zedekiah* 2. *Chron.* 36. 12. that he humbled not himself before *Jeremiah*, the Prophet, speaking the word of the Lord to him. *Obj.* But this subjection in Magistrats to Church Officers, is properly to Christ, and not to them? *Ans.* we confess, the subjection is primarily and cheifly to Christ Jesus, whom such, in the exercise of their Office, doe represent; yet the subjection is to them too, whom all, without exception of any in the Church, are commanded to receive, hear and obey: so that in the dispensation of holy things, they are

superiour

ſuperiour to all in the Church, Magiſtrats and others, as their conſtitut Rulers, Overſeers, Governours and Watch men, whom they ought to obey; when acting in their Office, agreable to the law of Chriſt: which obedience is not *CATACHRESTICAL* or *ABUSIVE* (as *VIDELIUS* ſpeaks) in the Magiſtrat, but proper and really, a debt they owe to the Miniſters of the Goſpel diſpenſing holy things, as much as any other member of the Church; their obligation to it being of the ſame kinde and nature, with the obligation of others. If any think otherwayes, let them produce their reaſons and Scriptures.

2. If the fiery and zealous promotters of the Magiſtrats power, in and over the Church of God, did conſider the true and real prejudice they do to Magiſtrats, by exeeming them from that ſubjection, that they, with all others, owe to Church Officers, they would (if there be any ſenſe of Religion and its advantages remaining with men) hold their hand; and ſhould have little thanks from Magiſtrats, for their prepoſterous zeal, who, by their opinions in this mater, do really exclude Magiſtrats from the Communion of the Church, and the benefite of the ordinance of Church Government, which in its deſigne and effects is for ſaving of the ſoul, as well as all other ordinances. Other Arguments might be adduced, as the want of power in the Magiſtrat to alter and change the Government of the Church; or to nullify its juſt ſentences paſſed, &c.

SECT.

SECT. VII.

The ſinfulneſs of the Eccleſiaſtick Supreamacy *manifeſted.*

BUt judging theſe ſufficient to the conviction o the unprejudged; we come to the other part of ou task, which is to ſhew, that this viſible intrinſick government of the Church is aſſumed by, and given to our Rulers, in the preſent ſtanding laws of the Kingdom; which we ſhall make out from the *acts of Parliament*; particularly *act of reſtitution. Parl.* 1. Seſſ. 2. *Act.* 1. *act anent the National Synod Parl.* 1. *Seſſ.* 3. *Act.* 4. *act againſt Conventicles Parl.* 2. *Seſſ.* 5. *act against Keepers of Conventicles and withdrawers &c Parl.* 2. *Seſſ.* 3. Act. 17. *act againſt unlawful ordinations Parl.* 2. *Seſſ.* 3. with others of the like nature. But, before we enter on the probation of this, it will be neceſſare, for clearing our way to it, to conſider a little two things, in the beginning of the narrative of the act of reſtitution, repeated in ſeveral acts: where, *firſt*, the Government of the Church is called the external Government of the ſame: the tearm, *EXTERNAL*, being Notourly ambiguous, ſhould have been explained, & all not left to gueſs at its meaning: *EXTERNAL* is by ſome oppoſed to the *internal invſible Government of Chriſt* on the ſouls of his people; and ſo by it they underſtand, the viſible intrinſick Government of the viſible Church: that this is meant by the tearm *EXTERNAL GOVERNMENT*, in this and other acts, the following Arguments undertake to make out: but

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ſome others oppoſe the terme *EXTERNAL GOVERNMENT*, to this intrinſick viſible Government of the Church, formerly deſcribed and aſſerted to be diſtinct from, and independant on the Maſtrat; and by it they do underſtand, theſe humane adjuncts and accidents, that are civil in themſelves, and not made ſacred by divine inſtitution: ſome plead this to be the ſenſe of theſe terms, in the acts of Parlt; but how groundleſly let our ſubſequent reaſons determine. *Secondly*, It is there ſaid, that the ordering and diſpoſing of the external government of the Church belongs to the Crowne, &c. it is hard to ſenſe this; for ordering and diſpoſing, when done by perſons in authority, is a part of government in it ſelf; and if it be ſo, the Phraſe is equivalent to this, the governing of the external government of the Church: which is a ſtrange ſort of ſpeach, as if a government needed a government to governe it: What if this were ſaid of the government of the government of the State? Would it not be reputed non-ſenſe? But the truth is, all governments do neceſſarily imply a power to diſpoſe and order all things relating to it, as a part of the ſame; & without which it were imperfect; and it is without diſput evident from the experience of the Church under heathenish Magiſtrats; that the government of the Church had this, which by this act is taken from her. *Next*, we ask, whether this ordering and dipoſing be an act of the Eccleſiaſtick or civil government? If it be of the Eccleſiaſtick, it is agaiine non-ſenſe, at the beſt; and is as much as if it had been ſaid, the Eccleſiaſtical governing of the Eccleſiaſtical government of the Church; a perfect tautology. But if it

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be an act of the civil government; how comes it, that in this and other acts of Parliament, it is called the *Kings Ecclesiastical Government*, in opposition to the civil? *Obj.* It is only objectively so called. *Ans.* Then it is properly and formally civil, the phrase, objectively Ecclesiastical being *CATACHRESTICAL* and *ABUSIVE*; a very improper speach; yea as improper, as if we should call Church power or Government, in the hands of Church officers, objectively civil, or civil. *Thirdly*, In the last place we desire to know, whether this ordering or disposing of the Government of the Church be necessary, or not? If it be not necessary, why is the Church troubled with it? If it be, we ask againe, when it was exercised by the Church, whether it was an act of civil or Church Government? It could not be of the civil; for the Church had none under persecuting Magistrats; if it was an act of the Ecclesiastical or Church Government; then it was purely and formally such; and not truely civil, although exercised about things civil in their owne nature, and seing it was so, how comes it to be the Magistrats now? To any considerat and unbyassed reader, it will be manifest, that these words or expressions come from mindes, designing the enhansing of the intrinsick visible Government of the Church, and withall labouring to cover it; but all in vaine.

Now that the Ecclesiastical Government of the Church, formally and intrinsically such, is assumed by, and given to the Magistrat, in the present standing lawes, will be apparent to any that consider these things, in the forecited *acts* of *Parliament*. (1.) That Church officers, in the exercise of Church government

vernment, in their Church aſſemblies or judicatories, are put in dependance upon, and ſubordinated to the King, as Supream to them therein: this makes the King the fountaine of Church power, & the Church officers to derive and hold their power of him; which makes our King the proper Head of the Church, & ſubſtituts him in Chriſts roome to her. (2.) The government of the Church, thus ſubjected to & dependant on the King as Supream, is, in the *act of reſtitution*, extended to and made to take in ordination, acts of diſcipline, inflicting of Church cenſures; yea to all cauſes and matters formally Eccleſiaſtical; to all, about which Church power is exerced, he is made the ſupream. (3.) All Church power and juriſdiction, as it was exerciſed in this Church (before the late introduction of prelacy) without this derivation from and ſubordination to the Magiſtrat, is reſcinded and annulled; certainly in theſe times, the Magiſtrat had and did exerciſe a power about Church matters; as is to be ſeen in the laws then made in their behalf; but this does not now content, without this ſupremacy; which imports another power acclamed by the Magiſtrat now, that was not then. (4.) This *ſupremacy*, and (as it is called) the *Royal prerogative of the Crown*, is given for the maine reaſon of the change made in the Government of the Church, in overturning and caſting out of the true government, that then was, and bringing in another in its ſtead, without the authority and concurrence of the Church: a fair opened doore, for bringing in the like alteration and change in doctrine and worship, when there is acceſs to it. (5.) Prelacy by this act is reſtored, not only to the former height it was

it was at, and had attained by law and practice, before its laſt ejection out of this Church; but alſo to all that ever it was, even in the times of popery; which when conſidered, in the conſtitution and priviledges it then had, was an humane Office founded on the Supremacy of the *Pope*; but now, by this law, on the Magiſtrat: which ſayes, that although the perſons be changed, yet the Supremacy is the ſame. (6.) In the act anent the *National Synod*, the nomination and election of perſons, by whom the government of the Church is to be exerciſed, under the King, is aſſerted to be the Kings, by vertue of his royal prerogative and ſupremacy, in cauſes Eccleſiaſtical; ſo that the conſtitution of Church judicatories is made dependant upon him: a thing never heard of nor practiſed in this or any other Church, till of late. (7.) The right, being and conſtitution of the National Synod of this Church, is wholly dependant upon, and derived from this law; So as it is no Synod of this Church, that is not gathered, and conſtitute conforme to it; although a Synod in this Church should have all, that made Synods lawful, and their acts obligatory, in former times. (8.) The particular conſtitution of this National Synod, as to its members, (which in this act are nominated and regulated thereby, for all future times) is determined for its times and places of meeting, and put wholly in the Kings hand, and aſſerted to be his right, by vertue of his Supremacy over this Church: It is no Synod that is not thus convocated. (9.) The maters to be handled, debated, and concluded in this Synod (a thing alwayes judged intrinſick to the Church) comes only from the King, & are to be propoſed

poſed from him, by the *Arch-prelat of Saint Andrews* and no other: a fearful reſtraining of the divine liberty of the Miniſters of the Goſpel, who may not ſpeak of maters of doctrine & manners, (although neceſſary for the times) contrare to the freedome, that is commanded them by their maſter, anent theſe. (10.) The King's, or his Commiſſioners preſence is made eſſential to theconſtitution, and of binding force to this nationall Synod: It is no Synod, although conſtitute after the paterne of Church Synods, in the primitive times; if it want this. (11.) No mater debated and concluded by the Majority of this Synod, is obligatory on this Church, and its members, if not approven and allowed by the King or his Commiſſioner. This ſuſpends the intrinſick obligation of Synods on the King; ſo that no canon, act or conſtitution, do binde the members of the Church, if he aſſent not: As this ſecures the Court, in their carnal liberties and ſinful wayes; ſo it ſhuts the door on all endeavours of reformation by the Church, when Princes are vicious. (12.) In the act aſſerting the Kings Supremacy Eccleſiaſtick, the King & his ſucceſſors are enabled and impowered to medle with all maters and meetings Eccleſiaſtick, which brings the doctrine and worship within his verge, and ſubjects the ſame to him, as much as the government. (13.) They are impowered to enact and emit conſtitutions, acts, and orders, anent maters and meetings Eccleſiaſtick, as they pleaſe and think fit, and are not, in the making of theſe, aſtricted to any rule, but their pleaſure, *O HORRENDUM!* (14.) All theſe acts and orders they may ſtatute, independant on the Church, Parliament, or any other, by their ſole au-

thority, never granted to any of his predecessours before. (15.) These acts and constitutions insert in the book of Councel, and duely published, are declared and made to be of full force and obligation to this Church and her members. No need of Synods here; which by this are wholly subverted. (16.) All former lawes, acts and clauses of them, contrare to and inconsistent with this, are made void, cassed annulled; which takes away the Protestant Religion, the Word of God as the rule, the concurrence of the Church in the assistance of the constitutions Ecclesiastical, that was provided and secured by former acts of Parliament: a wide door for Popery. (17.) In the act against unlawful Ordinations (as they call them) the Ordination of persons to the Ministry, by Ministers of Christ Jesus, that have not conformed to Prelacy, (which was held unquestionable & valid for its substance by all, till this late gang of Prelats arose, in which they are degenerat from their predecessours) is, by the sole authority of the Magistrat, made void; and all Ministerial acts, and Church benefites depending thereon, declared to be nul. An act that unchristians and condemns all the reformed Churches, making their Churches no Ministerial political Churches, and all Ordinances, dispensed in them, nullities: which their practice at this time in *England* does confirme; while Romish Priests turning Protestants, are, without ordination, made capable, and advanced to Church places and preferments; of which the Protestant Ministers of other Churches, conforming to Prelacy, are denied, till they be reordained. Other mediums contained in other acts of Parliaments, for fixing of the preceeding

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conclusions, we passe; having hinted at some of them above; judging these sufficient, for the conviction of the unintereſſed & unprejudged; who through the power of luſt and earthly intereſt, have not caſt off the light of the word, but keeps in ſubjection to it.

We ſhall in the laſt place anſwer ſome objections; in which, we have to do with two ſortes of perſons; *firſt*, the high flowne *Eraſtians* of our times, who will admit of no government in the Church, but that which is in and from the Magiſtrat, whoſe deſigne, (as is evident from the act aſſerting the Kings Supremacy) is, to take all Government out of the Churches hands; and to put it on the King & his Councel, to be only exerciſed by them: which, throw the diſlike of Prelacy, is not ſufficiently lamented, laid to heart, nor reſiſted by many, as its dangerous conſequences, to all the concerns of the Church, do require. Beſides theſe, there are, who, (upon what principle is not yet known,) think that the Supremacy, as it is now aſſerted by law, is not formally Eccleſiaſtical, but only objectively ſo; which is ſtrange: ſome of the objections of the firſt ſort, we have met with, as we went along the former heads; we know of no other, beſides theſe, of any conſiderable ſtrength; but one.

Obj. That the Magiſtrat being the keeper of both tables of the law; of the table of Religion, as well as of the table of Righteouſneſs; ought to have a care of Religion, and hath power given him to exerciſe it about the ſame? *Anſwer*, This being the *Achilles* of the *Eraſtians*, and *ſemi Eraſtians*; of *VIDELIUS* in particular; We ſhall returne theſe anſwers to it;

and shew it cannot bear their conclusion. 1. What-ever power the Christian Magistrat can clame by this, the heathenish Magistrat hath the same; he is by his Magistratical office constitute, *in actu primo*, a Keeper of both tables; as is evident from, *Rom.* 13: 1, 2. If he do not exercise it, it comes not from any defect of power in his office, or the institution of it; but from his blindness and unbeleef, which indispose him to answer his trust, and to do the work of his office; to which, upon the revelation of the Gospel, he is bound: and seing it is so, either the Church, in exercising of her Government independantly on heathenish Magistrats, usurped on his office & power; which the adversary dare no say: Or els the Christian Magistrat hath no more power in & over the Church, then the other had: and therefore the Church, in exercising her power under the Christian Magistrat, does not usurp upon him, more then on the other. 2. The Ministers of the Gospel are, by vertue of their office, Keepers of both tables of the law, of the table of Righteousness, as well as of the table of Religion: will it from thence follow, that they may medle with the Magistrats office, and assume its exercise; or that the same does depend on them? No wayes: and yet the consequence is as good in the one as in the other; by the same medium we shall prove Ministers, have as good right and power to manage the affairs of the State; as the Magistrat hath (in our adversaries sense) to manage the affairs of the Church. We know they will reject the consequence with disdaine, as to Ministers, and ask for our proofe, for which, we grant, they have just cause: so we deny the consequence as to the Magistrat, for

which

which they have not given us yet any colourable proofe; but dictator-like assert it. The truth is, every man in his capacity is a Keeper of both tables of the law; but in doing of it, is to hold within the compasse of his station, the nature, and limites of the power granted him; and is not to invade the office and power of others, nor the work proper thereto: as is evident from multitude of precepts in the Word of God. So if Ministers, notwithstanding their being Keepers of the tables of the law, may not invade the Magistrats office and power; So neither may Magistrats invade the Ministerial office and power. 3. The acts and wayes of the Magistrats keeping of the tables of the law, should answer, and be agreable to the nature, extent, and limits of his office & power; within the verge of which, he is to walk, as all others are to do in theirs: As Ministers are to keep both the tables of the law by preaching the word, dispensing of Ordinances, and exercising of discipline, according to the rules of the word; to which they are impowered by the institutions and commands of Christ, without dependance on the Magistrat; so the Magistrat is to keep them likwise, by commanding all to their severall duties, protecting them therein by the sword, which is given him for that end; executing of justice in punishing of evil doers, and rewarding the good, &c. but is not to medle with the Government of the Church, in whole or in part; but to see that it be done by these, whom Christ hath called to and intrusted with it.

It is *objected* by others, that it is not the intrinsick visible and internal Government of the Church, that the Magistrat assumes, in the acts of Parliament; it

is only the external Government, that is expreſſely ſo called, in the act of reſtitution? *Anſ.* This is materially Anſwered above; but that we may be diſtinct, there are two things belonging to the Church. (1.) The outward and external adjuncts or accidents; As the *Biotica* or *Mundana*, Stipends, Manſe Glybs, outward liberty and peace, &c. (2.) The proper and true objects of Church Government or power, that are intrinſick to it, although viſible; as the Word, Ordinances, Miniſtery and neceſſary circumſtances &c. It is not the *firſt* of theſe, but the *ſecond* that the act of reſtitution with other acts do truely mean, as is undoubtedly made out by the former arguments; as particularly the firſt three: that it is the Church judicatories; the maters handled in and by them, proper thereto, that conſtituts the King Supream; theſe being eſſential and intrinſick to the Government of the Church, in its ſeveral parts: he that is made ſupream to theſe, is made ſupream to the Church, and all that appertaine to her.

Obj. 2. But it is only the ordering and diſpoſeing of the Government, that is declared to belong to the King. *Anſ.* It is ſo ſaid in that act, but it is evident from the mater and frame of it, that it is the Government in whole that is truely meant and intended, as is formerly proven. But 2. Ordering and diſpoſing of things, proper and ſpecifick to any Government, is a part of the Government it ſelf; and to whom the Government belongs, the ordering of it belongs likwiſe: by the ſame reaſons that any ſhall undertake to prove, that the ordering and diſpoſeing of the civil Government belongs to the Ma-

giſtrat

giſtrat; we ſhall prove the ordering and diſpoſing of the Churches Government does belong to Church Officers: no Government can be perfect without it, or able to attaine its ends, and therefore muſt neceſſarily be implyed in, and intrinſick to it.

Obj. 3. But there are ſome acts of Church power the Magiſtrat may do, as convocating of Synods, determining of circumſtances, indicting of publict faſts and thanksgivings? *Anſ.* As we deny all formal Church power to the Magiſtrat, and all acts formally proceding therefrom; ſo we grant there are acts, *Firſt*, ſome common as prayer, rebuking, inſtructing of others, and others of the like nature: which, when they come from a Church Officer, are *authoritative* and acts of Church power; that are yet performable by others, in their ſtations, and (ſo to ſpeak) are *charitative*. 2. Some are proper and only belongs to Church Officers, as preaching of the Goſpel, diſpenſing of the Sacraments, exerciſe of Church diſcipline, &c. We doe not deny, but chierfully grant (wiſhing with all our hearts, there were many ſuch Magiſtrats in the Church) that the Magiſtrat ought to rebuke, to exhort, admonish, inſtruct & pray, &c. As all others in their ſtations and offices ſhould do; but from thence it will not follow, that he may exerciſe formal acts of Church power, more then others; or that the Church power is dependant on him: the Conſequence is wide. But to the particular inſtances; as, that of convocating of Synods or any Church judicatory, we ſay, it is within the verge of his power, as a Magiſtrat, who may and ought to command all within his dominions, to their ſeveral duties, and Miniſters among others, as they

ought to doe to him, ſo the Magiſtrats convocating of Miniſters, is but a putting of them to their duty, which in the Magiſtrat is no act of Church power; but an act of his office he owes to all. 2. This act or deed of the Magiſtrat, is not privative of the ſame in the Officers of the Church, who may & ought come together of themſelves, as the neceſſities of the Church requires. On the by, it is an evil conſequence; the Magiſtrat may gather Synods; therefore Miniſters may not doe it: It is like to this, others may rebuke, admoniſh, &c. Therefore Miniſters may not doe it. For although the Magiſtrat have an imperative power, over all; yet it is not privative of any power in others, that is proper to their ſtation and office. (2.) As for the determining of the circumſtances in Government, we reply, there are two ſorts of circumſtances relateing to theſe, firſt ſome extrinſick, and not in themſelves ſimply neceſſare, although convenient; as Churches of ſuch and ſuch formes, pulpets, ornaments, &c. Theſe, being in their natural uſe civil, belong to the Magiſtrat, and are directly under his power, to order and diſpoſe. *Next* 2. There are ſome circumſtances intrinſick to the actions of worship and Government, and ſo connected therewith, in that degree of neceſſity, that they cannot be performed without them; and come within the compaſs of divine commands, on which, the morality of individual actions, as to their goodnes and evil, *pro hic & nunc* does depend; as ſuch and ſuch perſons, doctrines, times, places, helps, &c. which all moraliſts and divines make to ſpecify all humane actions, as to their morality *in individuo*. Of theſe we aſſert, that the determination of them,

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as they reſpect worship and Government, and are connected with them, belongs to the Officers of the Church, and not to the Magiſtrat: we have given ſome reaſons for this before, as 1. we ſee commands given to the Church about them, and not to the Magiſtrat.; 1. Cor. 14. 2. If the determination of theſe were in the Magiſtrats power, it should be likewiſe in his power, to hinder, impede and obſtruct all right worship and Government, in its exerciſe, at his pleaſure for whoever hath theſe things in his power, without which, the actions of worship and Government cannot be performed, hath the actions in his power to hinder or not. 3. The conſequences of granting this to the Magiſtrat are miſcheivous: for by this, if he do not wholly hinder the exerciſe of the Miniſterial office and power; yet he may reſtrict and limit it ſo, as to bring them under dreadful unfaithfulneſs in their Miniſtry or office; he may binde them up from preaching ſuch and ſuch doctrines, that, at ſuch and ſuch times and in ſuch caſes, God calleth them to preach. As for the (3.) Inſtance, for indicting of dayes for ſolemne faſting and humiliation or of thankſgiving; we ſay, that we reckon it among theſe common duties of Religion, that every Chriſtian, in his ſtation, is bound by the command of God to obſerve; and according to the extent of their power to ſee them obſerved by others under them, when the diſpenſations of mercy and judgment cals them to theſe; as is clear from the precepts and examples we have in the word; ſo that all Chriſtians, in their ſeveral capacities, offices, powers and extent of the ſame, have the power of indicting and keeping of ſuch times and dayes; as

Maſters in families, paſtours in congregations, or in their aſſociations, and Magiſtrats, &c. From this it will not follow, that Magiſtrats, Maſters of Families, &c. their indicting of ſuch dayes for divine exerciſes, is an act of Church power; although it be ſuch in the Officers of the Church, and as it comes from them: no more then others rebuking, exhorting, &c. is an act of Church authority and power, although it be ſo from them. 2. That it only belongs to the Magiſtrat to indict dayes of publict faſtings, or of thankſgiving, & not to the paſtours of the Church, where hath our antagoniſts learned this? We grant the Magiſtrat participats with others in this power; but the nature of theſe duties, the precepts, and examples of the word, impowers others in their capacities, as much as him: it were eaſy to make this out. We acknowledge, for the more harmony in this publict work, and convenient following of it, with benefite and advantage to Church and State, it were expedient, that Magiſtrats and Miniſters did previously conſult, and agree about publict faſts and thankſgiving: but to affirme this, to the privation of the power and obligations, laid on others anent it; is not only an encroachment on the divine rights of others, but a looſing of theſe bonds, with which God hath tyed them; and what is this but to fight againſt God in the perſones of his Creaturs.

Obj. 4. Seing Miniſters are bound to give an accompt to the Magiſtrat, when required, of what they do, in the Government of the Church; will it not follow, they are ſubordinat to him in ſo far, in its exerciſe? *Anſ.* No wayes; for (1.) They ſtand obliged to do the like to all others, over whom they

they are ſet, and do rule; when their carriage in the Miniſtry is ſtumbling and offenſive to them; to which they are oblidged, both by general and particular precepts; and yet it will not follow, that in their Miniſtry they are ſubordinat to ſuch. (2.) The Magiſtrat, by vertue of his profeſſed ſubjection to Chriſt, is bound to give an accompt of his actings in his Government to Miniſters and others, when he proveth ſcandalous and offenſive: which many of them have done. To this they are obliedged, both on the accompt of their promiſed ſubjection to the word, its ordinances; and Chriſts ſervants, diſpenſing the ſame; and likewiſe on the accompt of Charity and love, that binds all, not only to endeavour the preventing, but removing of offences, when given; to which the Magiſtrat is as incident, in his capacity, as others; as alas ſad experience puts beyond debate!

Obj. 5. But as the Government of the Church, and its exerciſe, is the object of the Magiſtrats power and its acts; does he not act about thoſe imperially, and *Architectonice?* And if it be ſo, is he not Supream to & above the Miniſters of the Church, and they ſubordinat to him? *Anſ.* This is the objection of the greateſt ſeeming ſtrength; but on a ſerious conſideration of it, its weakneſs will ſoon appear. We yeeld, without any advantage to our enemies cauſe, that what the Magiſtrat does as ſuch, about Church maters and officers, he does it imperially and with dominion, and (as they uſe to ſpeak) *Architectonice*: but what then? It proves the perſons to be ſubordinat to the Magiſtrat in theſe his acts; but not the power in its exerciſe; nor the maters about

bout which it is exerciſed, for (1.) The Magiſtrat, when he by his irreligious and unjuſt carriage in his office, or otherwayes, becomes notoriouſly ſcandalous to the Church, is lyable to Miniſterial admonitions, rebukes, ſecluſions from the Sacraments, &c. And is thereby ſubordinat to Church power, or the Miniſters of Chriſt in exercing it about him; and yet the Magiſtratical power, and its exerciſe, is not ſubject to them, whatever reſiſtence our oppoſits make to this mutual ſubordination of the perſons of Magiſtrats and Miniſters: yet they muſt either deny the Chriſtian Magiſtrats the benefits of the Goſpel & its ordinances, diſpenſed by Miniſters; or els yeeld this truth. Is it not clear in other powers or relations? as ſuppone, one is both a Magiſtrat and a Son, is there not here a reciprocal ſubordination and ſuperiority of perſons with a coordination of powers, as is hinted above? We plead no more for the Miniſters of the Goſpel, and the Government of the Church commited to them. We grant a great difference in other reſpects, betwixt the Magiſtrat and Miniſters; they act as meer ſervants, without all dominion in them; He with dominion and Magiſtratical authority over the perſons of Miniſters: yet for all this the powers are coordinat, and in their exerciſe not directly ſubject to one another. (2.) Theſe powers, their exerciſe, and reſpective objects becoming reciprocally the object of one another (as the Miniſtry and its objects being one part of the Magiſtrats power, the Magiſtrat and the objects of his power, being likewiſe a part of the object about which Miniſters exerciſe their power) under different formalities and ſpecifications, there ariſes or reſults, not only a

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ſweet harmony, and a mutual ſubſerviency to one another, in advancing of their reſpective ends; but likewiſe an indirect ſubordination to one another, in the exerciſe of their powers, without any dependance of theſe powers upon one another. But this ſubordination is only of the perſons, and not of the powers: which by being the mutual objects of one anothers powers, does not ſubject the power, and its exerciſe, but only the perſons; for any thing or power becoming the object of another, does not ſubordinat it to that power; the Word, Ordinances, &c. are not, by being the object either of the Miniſterial or the Magiſtratical power, ſubordinated or ſubject thereto; ſo that the Miniſterial power, its exerciſe, and the maters about which it converſes, are not by being the object of the Magiſtrats power ſubordinated to it. This breaks the force of our adverſaries Argument, which lyes mainly in this.

Obj. 6. It is only this ſort of Supremacy and ſubordination, that the act of reſtitution does mean? *Anſ.* It is not ſo, as is clear from the words and frame of the acts; for it is the Church aſſemblies, their proper maters, their conſtitution, the intrinſick obligation of their concluſions, that are ſubordinated to the Magiſtrat; ſo that all is nothing without him.

Obj. 7. All Divines, even the Presbyterians and independents in the Church of *England*, grant the Magiſtrat to be Supream in all cauſes, and over all perſons Eccleſiaſtical; none of them ſcruple to take the oath of Supremacy, as it is eſtabliſhed by law in that Kingdom? *Anſ.* All Divines do not grant this, as is to be ſeen in the writings of many; and for any

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thing we know, it is not yeelded by the Presbyterian, and Independants, in the ſenſe controverted among us; neither can it, ſeing it quyt overthrows, all Church Government, in its diſtinction from and independency on the civil Government of the Magiſtrat, which is contrare to the known principles both of Presbyterians and Independants; and if the Prelats themſelves durſt ſpeak their minde, conforme to their owne principles, they would not in this differ from us (as *Thorndike* more free and engenuous then the reſt of his party does declame and cry out againſt the oath of Supremacy, as the great crying ſin of the Church of *England*;) but to an exceſſe, would aſſert all, and much more, then we do, in this mater, were it not for fear of offending the Magiſtrat, on whom now they wholly depend, and whoſe Creaturs they only are; which hath in our times reconciled the *Prelatical* and *Eraſtian* principles, at leaſt in appearance, that are moſt contrare to and diſtant from one another, yea more then theirs and ours. And although the Presbyterians and Independants, in the Church of *England*, do take the oath of Supremacy, yet it is with ſuch explications, allowed & aſſented to by the Magiſtrat, that give it a ſound ſenſe, which was ſtumbled and ſcrupled at both in Queen *Elizabeth* and King *James* times, till its ſenſe was explicat, and allowed; as is to be ſeen in the inſtructions given to juſtices of the peace, by Queen *Elizabeth*, for adminiſtrating the ſaid oath; & Bishop *Ushers* explanation of it, approven by King *James*: In which ſenſe it is underſtood & taken to this day among them. But to underſtand this mater aright, and to avoid the labyrinth of generalities & ambiguities, with which, ſome divines

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perplex & intricat it; it would be considered. 1. That there is a two fold proper supremacy, one civil, and another Ecclesiastical, about Church power, meetings and maters. 2. There are two Kinds of Causes, of those they call Ecclesiastical; some that are only extrinsically such, but in their nature, immediat ends and use civil, that, for their more remote ends and respects to things truely and properly sacred, are called Ecclesiastical, as lawes made for the Church & her concerns, outward liberty and peace, external rewards and punishments, &c. Againe some causes Ecclesiastical are intrinsically and formally such, as who shall preach the Gospel, & be invested with the Ministery, or who shall be deposed from it, who shall be rebuked, admonished and excommunicated; or received and admitted into the Church, &c. 3. The terme *CAUSES* is not here to be understood in a physical, but moral and juridical sense; that is, for questions to be decided by those, who are impowered, either by God or men, to this work. 4. Causes or questions, as they are the object of power & its exercise, are either proper and immediat; or els improper and remote. Hence we say. 1. That the Magistrat is Supream Governour in all things or causes, properly civil, relating to causes and persons Ecclesiastical: the judicial cognition and definitive judgment of these belong to him, and not to the Church: in this sense we admit the oath of Supremacy, & declared our selves willing to take it, which was refused us. 2. That the Magistrat is not the supreme Governour in Causes, and over persons formally Ecclesiastical: This we assert belongs to Christ Jesus only, and not to the Magistrat, as hath been proven above. This is

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the ſupremacy, we deny to the Magiſtrat, and for which we have declined to take the oath anent it, that is now eſtabliſhed law, being perſwaded (for the reaſons formerly given) that this is the ſupremacy granted by law; and underſtood in this oath. But 3. That cauſes and perſons formally Eccleſiaſtical, are not the proper and immediat object of the Magiſtrats power, but only improper and remote, and the reaſon is, becaus in the execution of Chriſts law given to the Church, the judicial cognition and definitive judgment about theſe belongs not to the Magiſtrat, but to the Miniſters of the word; as for inſtance, it is not the Magiſtrats part to cognoſce and determine, who is to be received into the Church, and who not; this is proper to the Miniſters of the Goſpel: and ſo of other cauſes and queſtions of the like nature. *Obj.* Then the Magiſtrat, in protecting, countenancing and furthering of the Churches acts and ſentences by the ſword, muſt be a blinde executer of them? *Anſ.* This muſt be ſaid out of envy and malice; for (1.) the Church is the executer of her own acts and ſentences, and not the Magiſtrat, who only puts to execution his owne lawes, that he is pleaſed to enact on her behalf. (2.) It is known to all, that we grant to the Magiſtrat, (and to all in the Church,) a diſcretive judgment to cognoſce on the Churches acts and ſentences; and if he finde them not to be juſt, he hath a definitive judgment, anent the execution of his own Lawes made about them: for the obligation that ariſes from Churches acts and ſentences on all in the Church, to the obeying and furthering of them, is only conditional, and not abſolute; that is, none is bound to obey and advance

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theChurches ſentences, except their mater be juſt and righteous; which muſt be firſt known before they finde themſelves obliged to this. But here the immediat object of the Magiſtrats power and its exerciſe, about Church acts and ſentences; is properly civil, and not Eccleſiaſtical, to wit, whether he will execute his owne law or not. Theſe things are eaſy and plaine, and if ambition and worldly intereſts had not determined many to the contrare, there would be little controverſie about them.

Obj: 8. The Magiſtrats power and its exerciſe about Church maters and meetings, being independant on the Church; what he does in relation to Church concerns, determinations and ſentences, he may doe it antecedent to theſe, without the Church. *Anſ.* We deny the conſequence to be univerſally true: for ſome of the Magiſtrats ſentences about Church maters and meetings doe neceſſarly ſuppone, the Churches ſentences and acts, for their object; as theſe of ordination, excommunication: acts of regulation &c. muſt neceſſarly paſs, before the Magiſtrat can reach the perſons and things, to which they are applyed: for inſtance, before the Magiſtrat can doe juſtice to a Miniſter in his maintenance, he muſt firſt be ordained, & by it have right thereto, on the Churches act of ordination; which muſt firſt be known to the Magiſtrat, and by him given as the ground or reaſon of his ſentence, for the Miniſters legal right to enjoy and uſe the provided and allowed maintenance; and ſo of many others. We grant, in ſome caſes and things, a power to the Magiſtrat about Church maters and meetings, which he may exerciſe, antecedent to the exerciſe of Church power;

he may, yea, no doubt, he ought to command Miniſters, when negligent, to their work or duty, without a Church ſentence, yea contrare to it: but to ſay, that the exerciſe of his power, in many things and caſes, is not neceſſarly ſubſequent to the acts and exerciſe of Church power, is moſt abſurd, & abhorrent to all right reaſon; ſeing there are many things that the Magiſtrat ought to doe to and for the Church, that neceſſarly ſuppone, not only the being, but the exerciſe of Church power, without which the Magiſtrat cannot doe: how ſhall he punish contumacious, heretical and excommunicat perſones till they be firſt dealt with by the Church, conforme to the rules of the word, and declared to be ſuch, &c. The reaſon of the conſequence is weak; for all created power ſuppones its object, and in its exerciſe muſt be ſubſequent and poſtertour to it; which is not inconſiſtent with the independency of any power on another; as is to be ſeen in the inſtance of the marital power, and others; the power of the Magiſtrat about it preſupponeth the conjugal relation, & its acts, before it can put the laws in execution anent it, in application to the perſones under that relation. The deſigne of this objection is obvious, which is, to evert all Church Government, the neceſſity and uſe of it: but before it have its full intended force, it muſt firſt be proven, that Church power and its acts are competent to the Magiſtrat, and may be done by him; as that he may ordaine, depoſe, receive into, and caſt out of the Church, preach the word, diſpenſe all ordinances, &c. which no *Eraſtian* hath yet done; for if theſe be incompetent to the Magiſtrat, and are to be done by others, the former concluſion will hold. Con-

Conclus. Haveing thus, with all Christian ingenuity and plainness in the words of truth & sobernes, discovered our hearts anent the foregoeing particulars: we expect that much charity and justice from all, (even our Antagonists) that before they give out their censurs, they will seriously consider, what is said, and in the ballances of Scripture and true reason, impartially ponderat the reasons and grounds of our judgment and practice: least, in stead of fighting against us, they happily be found to fight against God; for seing the grounds, on which we build, are of common obligation on all Christians, and on which, our Christian profession leans; none can refuse our conclusions, but they must either contradict and shake the foundations of the said profession; or els shew their inconsequence, and inconsistancy with these: we have not insisted on, nor much made use of particular places of Scripture, nor wrangled (as many in their debaits doe) about the sense and application of these, nor laid the stress of our arguments from antiquity on citations from particular fathers and historians; but on the series and threed of these ancient records; to which we appeal, anent the maters debated in the preceeding discourse: as any, that deals candidly and impartially, will, on trial, find. The issue of our adversaries arguments, in the defence of the *Antitheses*, resolving in these three, the imperfection of the Scriptures; the manifest and violent perverting and wresting of them; the professed and open contradicting of their authority, by *Hobs. Leviathan*, and others more gross, (if grosser can be), do sufficiently declare, what the tendency of the contrare opinion is, and what we may

expect, will be the result of the same, if things continue, for some time, in their present channel. All Protestants, before these debats entered on the field, esteemed the perfection of the Scriptures, the chief and principal foundation of the reformed protestant Religion; and builded thereon their doctrins, in opposition to popery: which, the patrones of prelacy doe now strick at, and labour to shake, in denying their sufficiency or perfection, in maters of obedience or practice; whereby they break the force of all the arguments, that the Protestants used against the Papists, for the fulness and perfection of the holy Scriptures: and the truth is, prelacy cannot be maintained without this assertion; as is to be seen in the most eminent assertors of it: for if we hold the Scriptures to be a perfect and full rule of faith and manners, and not to be receded from, in maters of doctrine, worship and Government; the prelacy controverted, having so little evidence from them, it cannot stand, and if this sufficient regulation of the Scriptors be refused, what a wide door is opened to humane inventions; and what may not men bring in at it, to the corrupting and polluting of all the Churches concerns? We grant, the admitting of the Scriptures, for a pairt of the Churches Canon and rule, seems to draw a barr on much of the Romish trash, (which is condemned thereby;) but doe not the prelates boldness, in violenting and forceing of them, in answering of our arguments, and maintaining of their concepts, remove this barr, and lay the door open, for what they will? for howbeit the Scripture speaks, against the worshiping of Creatures, Images, Angels and Men, and chargeth these pra-

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ctiſes with idolatry: yet *Thorndike*, and moſt of the now prelatical gang, purge the popiſh maſſe, the worshiping of the hoſt, of the virgine Mary, Images & Saints, from idolatry and ſuperſtition. How impudently bold are the *Eraſtians*, in wreſting the Scriptures, uſed by their antagoniſts; in which they are not inferior to the *Socinians*, and the moſt noted hereticks of the Church; but we muſt ſay, with leſſe shew of reaſon; as will be evident to any, that will compare them together in their comments. What ſecurity can the Church promiſe her ſelf from theſe mens principles and wayes, who build their concluſions, on ſuch foundations, which if once admitted overturns all? But alas! when to enlarge the Magiſtrats power, and to give ſupport to their wild aſſertions about it, the divine authority and doctrins of the Holy Scriptures are boldly contradicted; and all Religion ultimatly reſolved into the Magiſtrats Conſcience and Lawes; as *Hobs Leviathan*, *Parker* & others, undertake to make out, againſt the foundations & ſuperſtructurs of our Religion, are they not thus pulled done to uphold the Magiſtrat, & to extend an immenſe power in him? but, we hope, to the external ſhame, confuſion and ruine of the cauſe for which they contend. How much doe we finde that ſaying of *Pauls* 2. *Timoth* 3. 13. verified in theſe men. *evil men and ſeducers ſhall wax worſe and worſe, deceiving and being deceived*? but our confidence is, that their *folly being made maneſeſt to all men, they ſhall proceed no further*: for the cauſe which they oppoſe is Gods, and that which he muſt owne and plead; ſeing the Royal prerogative of his abſolute Soveraignity and Supremacy, are intrinched upon, and

struck at, by his Creatures, the wormes of the earth; who, contrare to their indebted and professed subjection to him, assault his throne, and invade the regalities of his high and glorious Crowne, which he will uphold. OH that all, ingadged in this warr against the Lord and his anointed, would read and consider the *Second Psalme*, and yet hearken to what is there foretold anent the issue of it, which will be sad and heavy to them, that obstinatly set themselves in opposition to Christ and his Kingdome. Let none, that side with Christ in this quarrel, be affrayed or ashamed, to appear in its defence against all sorts of opponents; for as we have the full light and evidence of the Word of God, to justify its righteousnes, from the reproaches of men: So we have the righteous and Almighty God to take our part, who, on the account of his justice and Supream dominion, is ingadged to owne them, that owne him in this cause. In contending for these, we contend not for honours, dignities and the riches of this world; but only for the Lawes, Ordinances, and Servants of Christ Jesus, and that obedience and subjection to him in them, that he requires of all in his word; yea for the Royal dignities, & supereminent prerogatives of his righteous and glorious Crowne, which the Father hath placed on his head; giving him a name above all names, that, in the name of this JESUS, all knees should bow, yea shall bow. Who needs to be affrayed, who owne such a King, and have him on their side, who in his own persone overcame & Triumphed over all his enemies, & yet againe will doe so, in the persones of his weak, contemned and persecuted servants & people. The Lord build up the walls of Jerusalem, & make her a peacable habitation. Amen.